VISIT…

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Epic Comics Book 4 $4.95 $5.95 CAN

CLIVE BARKER'S HELLRAISER™

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Scott Hampton

Jan Strnad
Mark Chiarello

Kent Williams

foreword
D. G. Chichester

Cenobite!
Nicholas Vince
writer
John Van Fleet
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Like Flies to Wanton Boys
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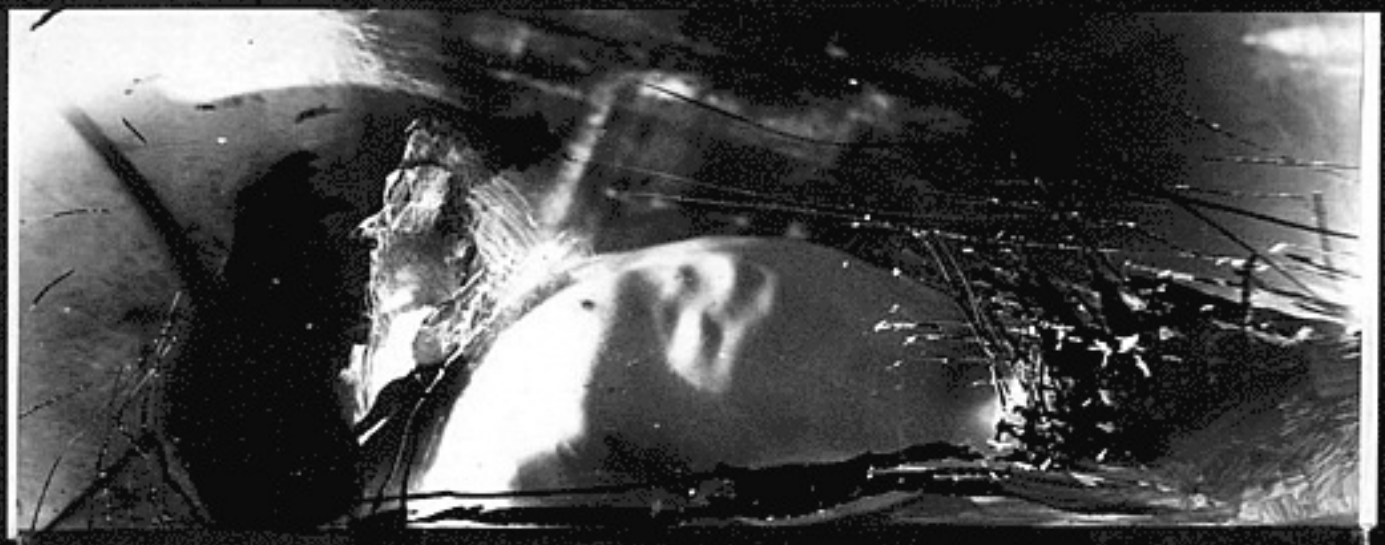


FOREWORD

The joys and chores of editing the cruel comic you hold in your soon-to-be trembling hands can best be described using the title of another of Mr. Barker's creations; in short, it's a damnation game. And, like all good games, players come—roll dem bones, dem bones—and then those players must go, on to face other challenges.

By example, after succeeding my original reign of terror amongst these pages, editor Margaret Clark has now also chosen to make her escape. And as she ascends to a heavenly heading-up of a number of new projects coming out from U.K. based Neptune Publishing, it's time for yet another player to sell his soul . . .

. . . or, to coin another phrase, "There's a new sheriff in town, and his name's Marc McLaurin."

No stranger to these blighted shores, Mr. McLaurin penned the relentless tale of "The Vault" in **Hellraiser** No. 2. Having survived the there-and-back of that experience, Marc is *still* eager to leap into the abyss as Hellraiser's new editor; go figure. With such diverse projects as **Critical Mass** and **Marvel Monster Masterworks** under his belt, Marc comes to Hell with enthusiasm certain to bring this book to new heights—or, more importantly, new depths.

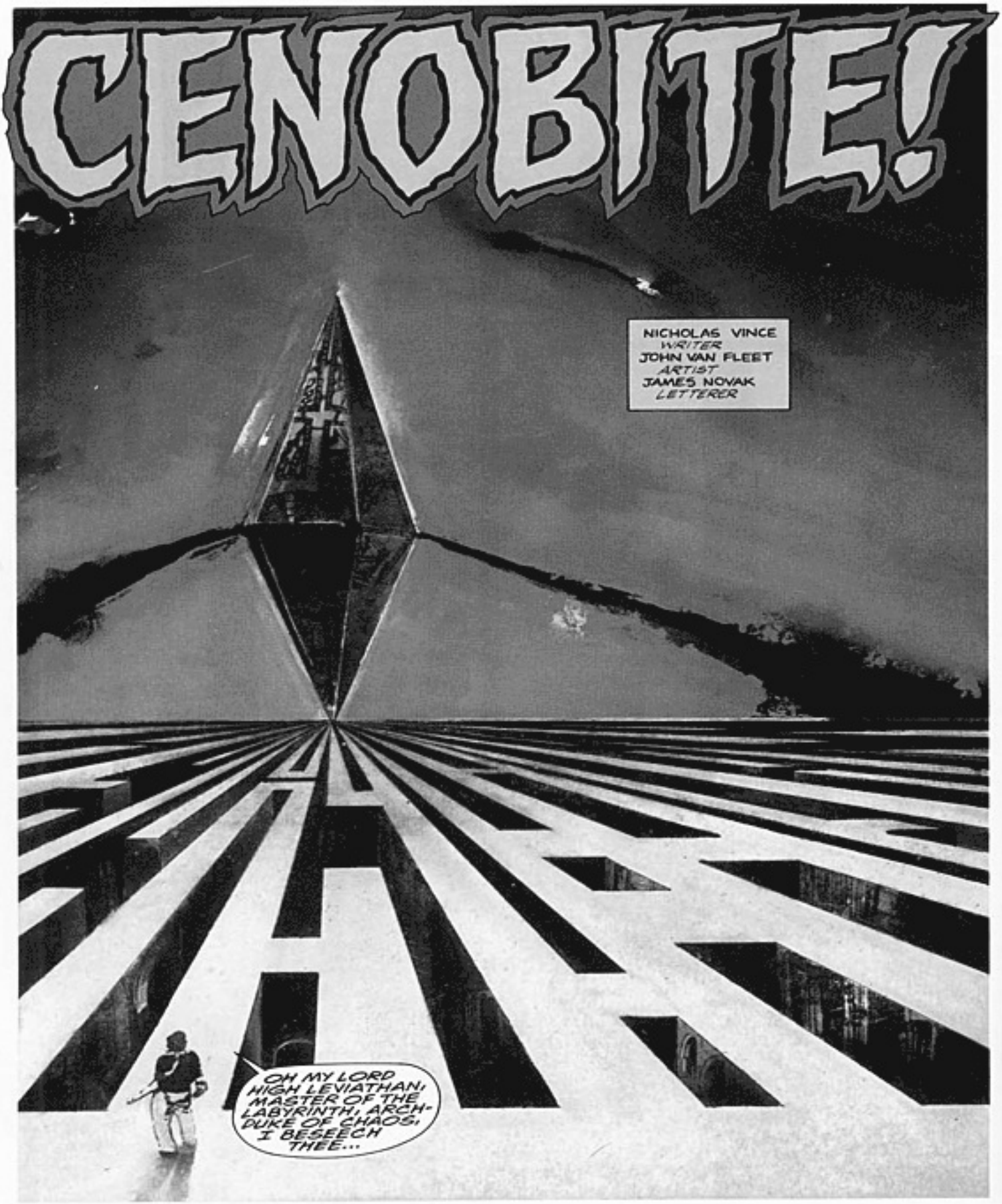
On this issue's descent, you will be treated to such sights as "Cenobite," a how-to guide by Nicholas Vince and artist John Van Fleet. Having played the Cenobite "Chatterer" in the *Hellraiser* series of films, Nicholas is uniquely qualified to document the procedure by which one gets that stylish blue-skinned, self-mutilated look. And while this is Mr. Van Fleet's first foray into Leviathan's realm, it certainly won't be his last—he's currently preparing a **Hellraiser/Nightbreed** crossover to be published in the near future. "Like Flies To Wanton Boys" once again gives us the pleasure of presenting Scott Hampton's portrayals of pain (try saying that the proverbial ten times), this time teamed with sister Bunny Hampton-Mack; it's a gothic proverb on the dangers of opening the wrong doors. And in "To Prepare A Face," one of Hell's favorite sons, Jan Strnad, takes time out from working on **Stalkers** to conclude his informal trilogy of the Cenobite Face; it's a look into darkness courtesy of Mark Chiarello who, in addition to being an extraordinarily talented artist, is also the living reincarnation of Montgomery Clift.

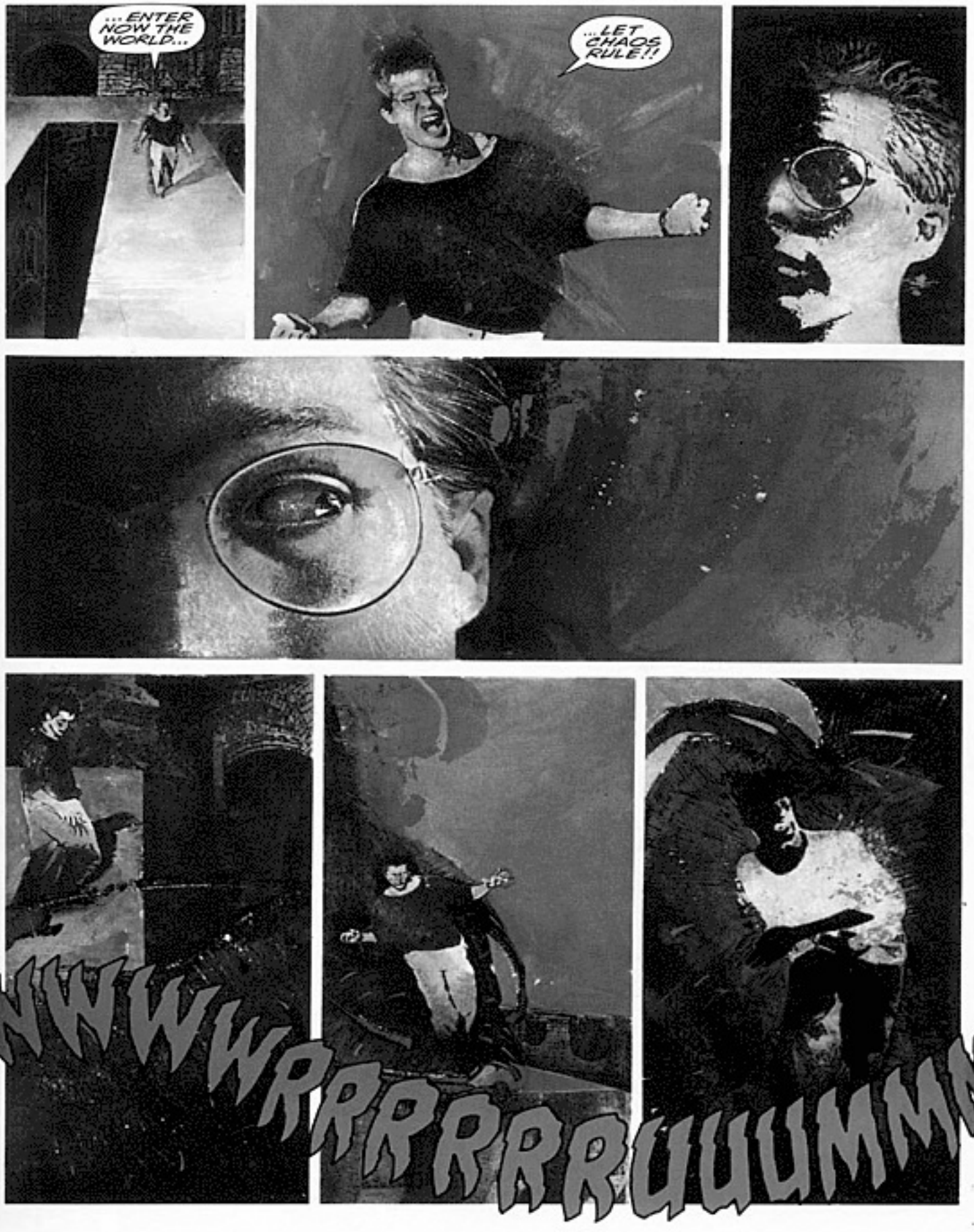
With such chilling creativity to ice our dreams, Marc and I have given up any hope of getting any sleep for ourselves; better we devote our time toward making sure your nights are equally pleasant. We're currently working with Clive to set loose new demons and directions for this comic configuration that we feel sure are going to keep you enjoying Hell as much as we do. After all, gentle reader, you're going to be down here with us a long time, aren't you?

A very, very long time . . .

Daniel Chichester
consulting editor

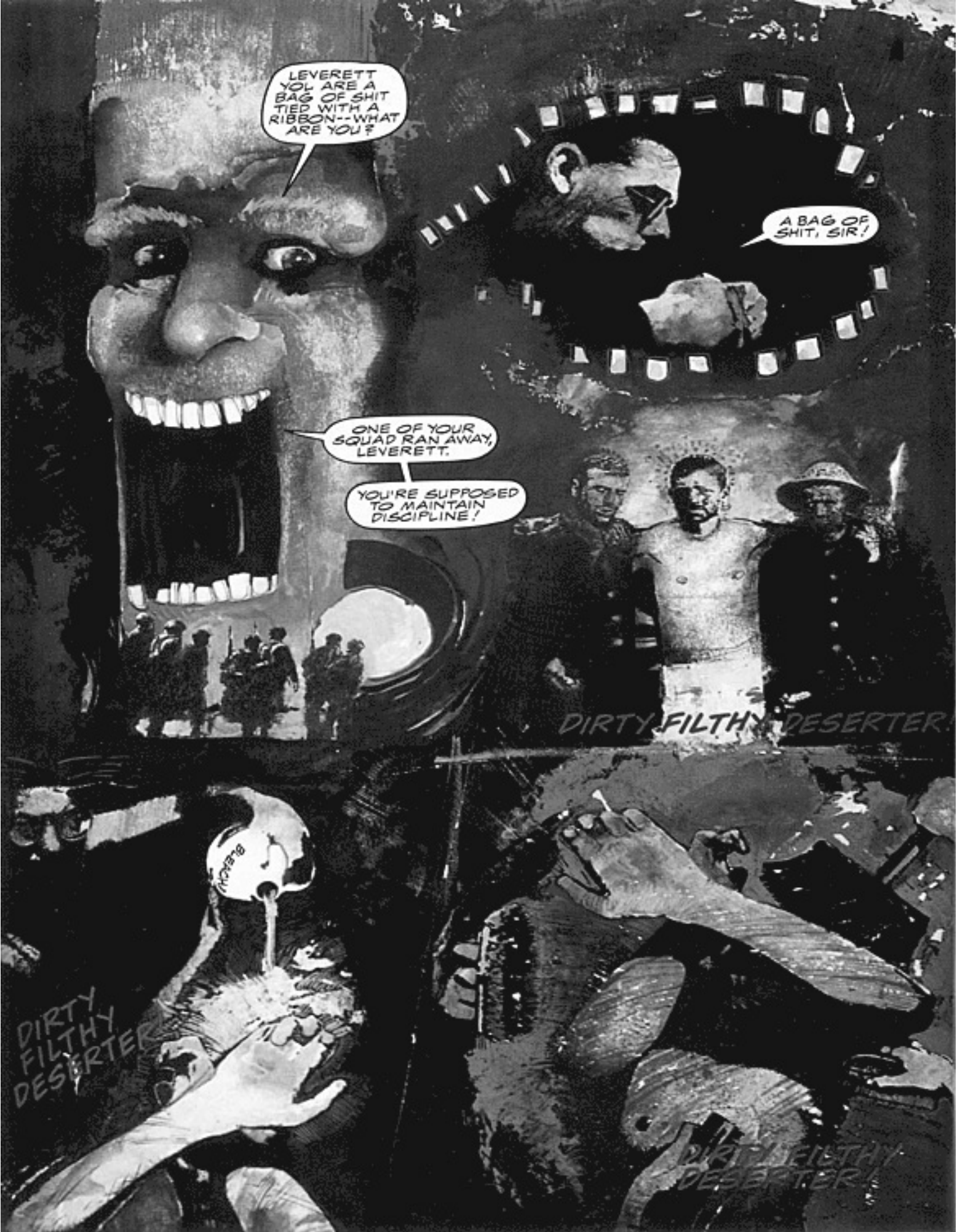
YOU SEE BARBERA: I'M NOT HOOKED ON ORDER-- I JUST ACTED ON IMPULSE.
BARBERA, ADIEU.
I'M LOST.
AT LONG LAST I'M LOST!
AND LOST, I HAVE FOUND WHAT I LOOKED FOR.
YOU SHOULD HAVE SEEN THIS, BARBERA. TASTED THIS CONFUSION.
THIS SWEET SWEET CHAOS.


CENOBITE!
NICHOLAS VINCE
WRITER
JOHN VAN FLEET
ARTIST
JAMES NOVAK
LETTERER
OH MY LORD HIGH LEVIATHAN, MASTER OF THE LABYRINTH, ARCH-DUKE OF CHAOS, I BESEECH THEE...


...ENTER NOW THE WORLD...
...LET CHAOS RULE!!
WWWRRRRRRUUUMMM

WHAT'S YOUR NAME BOY?
Edward Leverett, sister.
HERE YOU'LL ANSWER TO THE NAME OF LEVERETT.
UNDERSTAND?
YOU'RE TO LOOK AFTER THIS NEW BOY. BARTLETT'S HIS NAME AND MAKE SURE HE BEHAVES.
BARTLETT'S SHIT HIS SHEETS AGAIN, LEVERETT. CLEAR IT UP AND TEACH HIM NOT TO DO IT AGAIN.
SHITTER!
SHITTER!
SHITTER!

BUT I HAD TO MAINTAIN DISCIPLINE AND ORDER!
THE SISTERS TOLD ME I WAS IN CHARGE!
IF ONE SINNED WE ALL SUFFERED!
WHY ARE YOU PUNISHING ME?

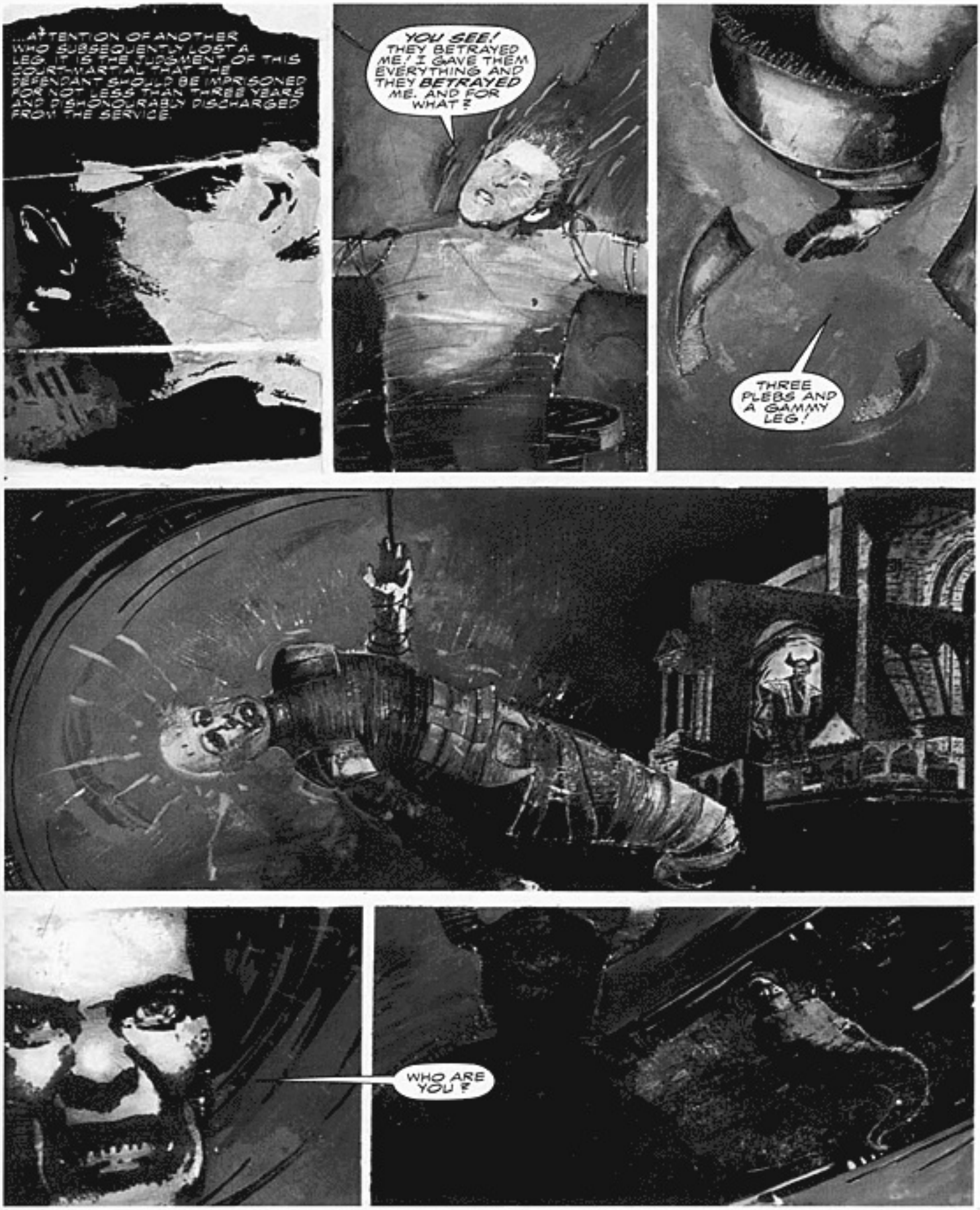

LEVERETT YOU ARE A BAG OF SHIT TIED WITH A RIBBON--WHAT ARE YOU?
A BAG OF SHIT, SIR!
ONE OF YOUR SQUAD RAN AWAY, LEVERETT.
YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO MAINTAIN DISCIPLINE!
DIRTY FILTHY DESERTER
BEAT!
DIRTY FILTHY DESERTER
DIRTY FILTHY DESERTER!

YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND: HE WAS A PIECE OF GRIT IN THE MACHINE. HE HAD TO BE DEALT WITH.
HE'D DISHONOURED THE REGIMENT! THE OTHERS EXPECTED ME TO DO IT!
EVEN BARBERA UNDERSTOOD THAT.

OH, PLEASE, NO.
NOT THIS -- PLEASE DON'T MAKE ME...
...MAKE ME LOOK AT THE FALKLANDS.
NEW ORDERS FROM BATTALION H.Q. SIR. WE'RE TO WITHDRAW AND...
BUT SIR! PRIVATE JONES NEEDS HELP -- WE MUST...
I CAN'T HEAR YOU CORPORAL: TOO MUCH NOISE! OUR ORDERS ARE TO TAKE THE ARGENTINE POSITION!
ARE YOU DISOBEYING MY ORDER CORPORAL?

IT'S ALRIGHT JONES. WE'RE JUST GOING TO CAPTURE THAT SCHOOLHOUSE AND THEN WE'LL BE BACK FOR YOU.
"THE FLESH IS WEAK," CORPORAL. YOU HAVE TO SUBDUE IT. DON'T WORRY THERE WILL BE A MEDAL IN THIS FOR YOU TOO.
PLEASE SIR--I DON'T WANNA DIE!
WHEN I GIVE THE SIGNAL YOU ATTACK THE TARGETS I HAVE SPECIFIED.
NOW!
MY GRANDFATHER WAS IN THE TRENCHES IN THE FIRST WORLD WAR...
BBBRRWOOPPPPPP
...HE WOULD HAVE UNDERSTOOD.

WELL, JENKINS--WE MADE IT!
YES SIR--"WE" DID.
CLICK
DROP YOUR GUNS!
WE FIND THAT THE DEFENDANT DISOBEYED A DIRECT ORDER AND BY SO DOING LED TWO OF HIS MEN TO THEIR DEATHS. FURTHER HE IGNORED THE NEED FOR MEDICAL...


...ATTENTION OF ANOTHER WHO SUBSEQUENTLY LOST A LEG. IT IS THE JUDGMENT OF THIS COURT-MARTIAL THAT THE DEFENDANT SHOULD BE IMPRISONED FOR NOT LESS THAN THREE YEARS AND DISHONOURABLY DISCHARGED FROM THE SERVICE.
YOU SEE! THEY BETRAYED ME! I GAVE THEM EVERYTHING AND THEY BETRAYED ME. AND FOR WHAT?
THREE PLEBS AND A GAMMY LEG!
WHO ARE YOU?

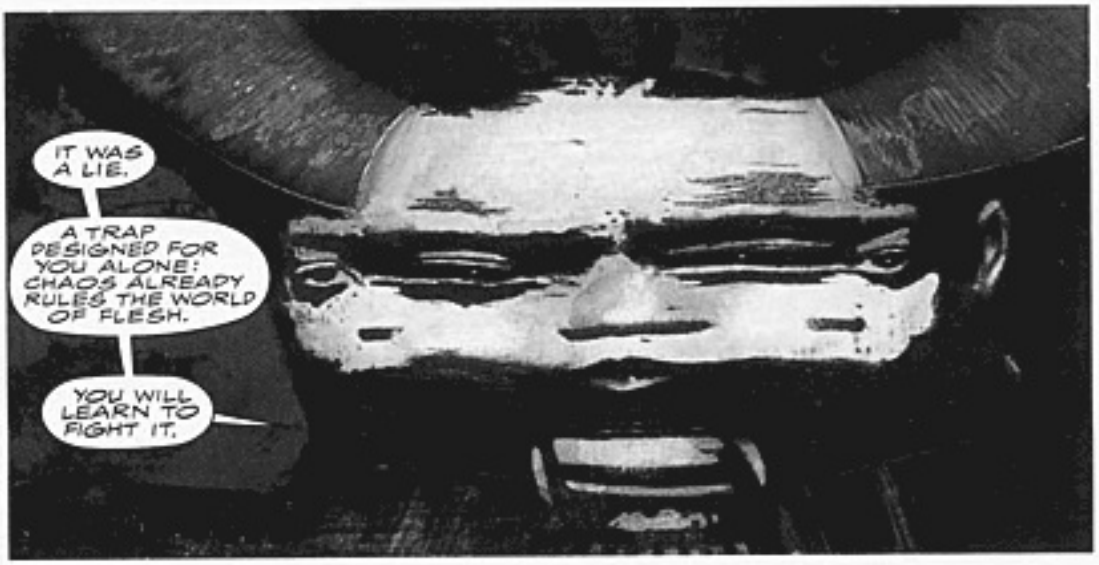
THIS IS WEIRD, BARBERA. THIS PACKET WAS IN OUR MAIL BOX BUT IT'S FOR SOMEONE CALLED STRICKLAND.
WHAT'S THE ADDRESS?
I CAN'T READ IT. IT WAS SENT FROM LONDON THOUGH.
LOOK HONEY, I'M LATE. I'LL SEE YOU AT THE GALLERY FOR THE PRIVATE VIEW AT SIX SHARP.
YOUR WORK MAY BE BASED IN CHAOS BUT PUNCTUALITY PAYS.
AND EDWARD, MAKE NICE WITH THESE PEOPLE, PLEASE. IF YOU WANT TO SELL ANYTHING YOU'LL HAVE TO. O.K.?
MMMMM O.K.
AND EDWARD YOU CAN JUST DROP THE PACKET IN THE MAIL ON YOUR WAY IN THIS EVENING.
"DEAR MR. STRICKLAND, ENCLOSED THE LAMENT CONFIGURATION, VARIOUSLY KNOWN AS LEMARCHAND'S BOX, AFTER ITS CREATOR PHILLIP LEMARCHAND OR THE INVITATION TO CHAOS."
IT IS A SUPPOSED KEY WHICH WHEN SOLVED OPENS THE DOORS TO HELL AND GIVES ADMITTANCE TO THE ORDERS OF CHAOS AND THEIR LORD: LEVIATHAN. AND THEIR SOURCE NAMES IT THE 'GOTTER-DAMERUNG TERNIK'. THIS IS TAKE TO IMPLY THAT IT WILL BRING ABOUT THE 'TWILIGHT OF THE GODS' AND INDICATES THAT CHAOS WILL TRIUMPH.
RING RING RING

EDWARD! WHAT IN HELL'S NAME DO YOU THINK YOU ARE PLAYING AT?
EDWARD--IT IS NOW NINE O'CLOCK AND I HAVE BEEN CALLING YOU FROM THE GALLERY FOR THE PAST THREE HOURS.
WHY DIDN'T YOU ANSWER?
EDWARD! TALK TO ME!
LET GO OF MY HAIR.
I DON'T KNOW WHY I DIDN'T COME TONIGHT. THIS SEEMED IMPORTANT.
WILL YOU PLEASE STOP USING YOUR CONFUSION AS AN EXCUSE. I KNOW IT'S SAFE AND NO ONE ASKS YOU TO MAKE A DECISION, BUT IT'S ADOLESCENT. YOU'VE GOT TO BE ORGANISED.
ORDER BETRAYED ME!!! "GIVE US YOUR LOVE," THEY SAID. "GIVE US YOUR HOPES, FEARS AND TRUST AND BE NOT AFRAID. WE WILL MAKE YOUR DECISIONS AND IN RETURN YOU WILL SERVE US AND MAINTAIN DISCIPLINE."

O.K. SO THE ARMY WASN'T RIGHT FOR YOU. BUT THERE HAS TO BE ORDER.
ORDER IS UNNATURAL. EVEN SCIENTISTS ADMIT IT.
THE UNIVERSE WILL NOT CONFORM TO THEIR 'GRAND UNIFIED THEORY' FOR PHYSICAL EXISTENCE. EVERYTHING DISSOLVES INTO CHAOS AND THAT IS THE NATURAL STATE OF THINGS AND...
WHAT IS IT YOU ARE LOOKING FOR EDWARD? SOME MYSTICAL STATE OF PERFECT BEING? DO YOU THINK THAT RETURNING TO THE PRIMEVAL STEW IS SOME FORM OF ENLIGHTENMENT?
...AND IF IT MEANS SETTING THE DEVIL AMONGST MANKIND TO TEACH HIM HIS HUBRIS THEN SO BE IT!
YOU CAN HAVE NO IDEA HOW PATHETIC YOU REALLY ARE. SO YOU ARE TO BE THE MESSIAH OF CHAOS? EDWARD, YOU MOVED FROM THE TWISTING STREETS OF LONDON TO THE GRID SYSTEM OF MANHATTAN.
YOUR MUGS ALL HANG IN THE SAME DIRECTION. THE PHONE IS ALWAYS REPLACED TO THE RIGHT.
FACE IT EDWARD YOU ARE HOOKED!

NAME?
EDWARD LEVERETT.
FROM NOW ON YOU DO NOT HAVE A NAME. YOU ARE A CENOBITE. YOUR SOLE PURPOSE -- TO IMPOSE ORDER ON THE WORLD OF FLESH. YOUR SOLE REASON -- BECAUSE LEVIATHAN DESIRES IT.

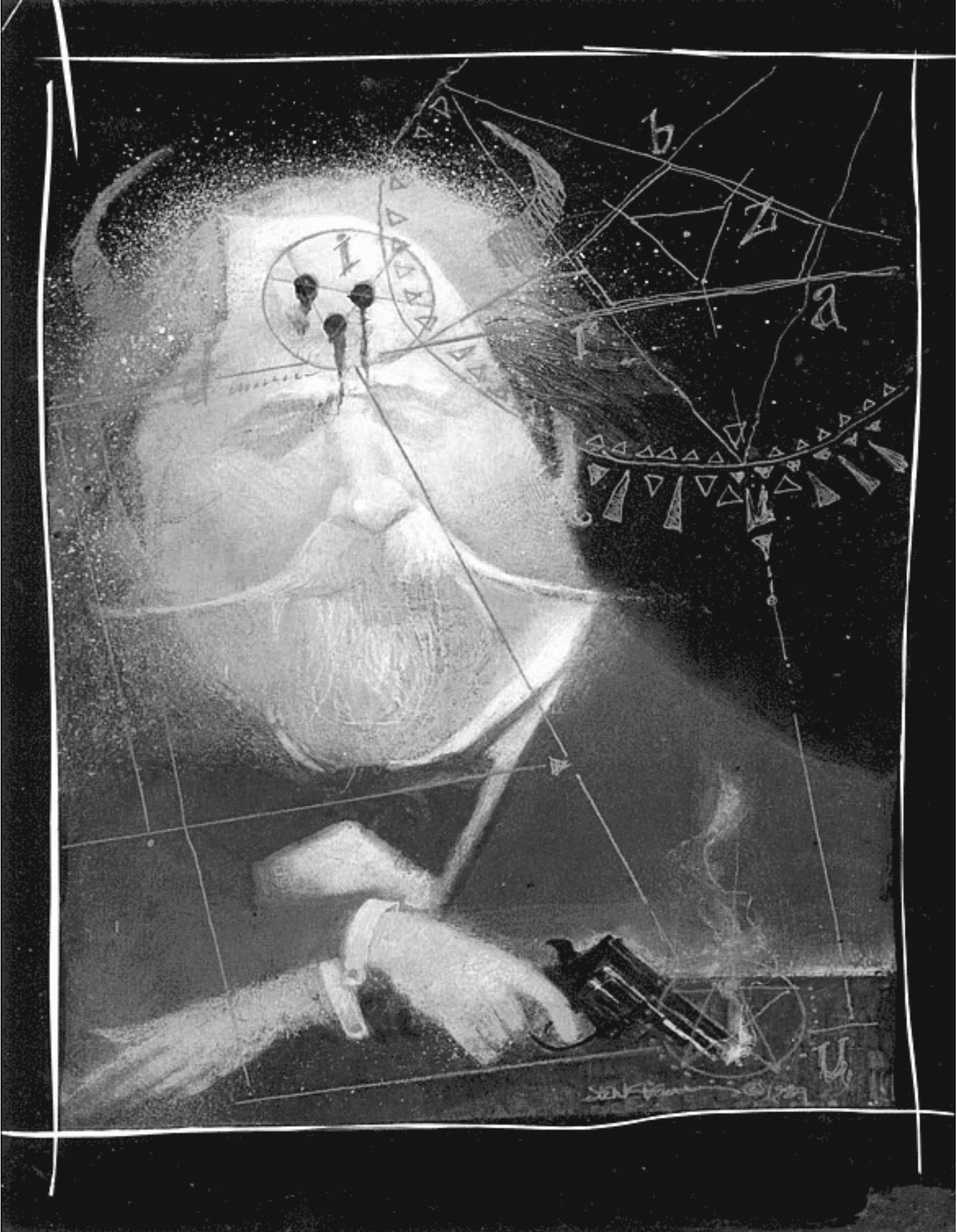
BUT THE BOX... IT SAID CHAOS WOULD RULE.


IT WAS A LIE.
A TRAP DESIGNED FOR YOU ALONE: CHAOS ALREADY RULES THE WORLD OF FLESH.
YOU WILL LEARN TO FIGHT IT.

YOU WILL LIVE BEHIND THEIR WORLD. YOU WILL NOT QUESTION. YOU WILL PERVERT, DESTROY, CORRUPT AND ABOVE ALL, YOU WILL OBEY.
THE HOLY WAR WILL BE WON.
LEVIATHAN WILL TRIUMPH OVER FLESH. ORDER WILL SUCCEED CHAOS.

AT LAST, I HAVE A COMMANDER.
NO. A MASTER, TRULY WORTHY OF THAT NAME.
AT LAST I AM SLAVE.

The End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Like Flies to Wanton Boys

written by
Bunny Hampton-Mack

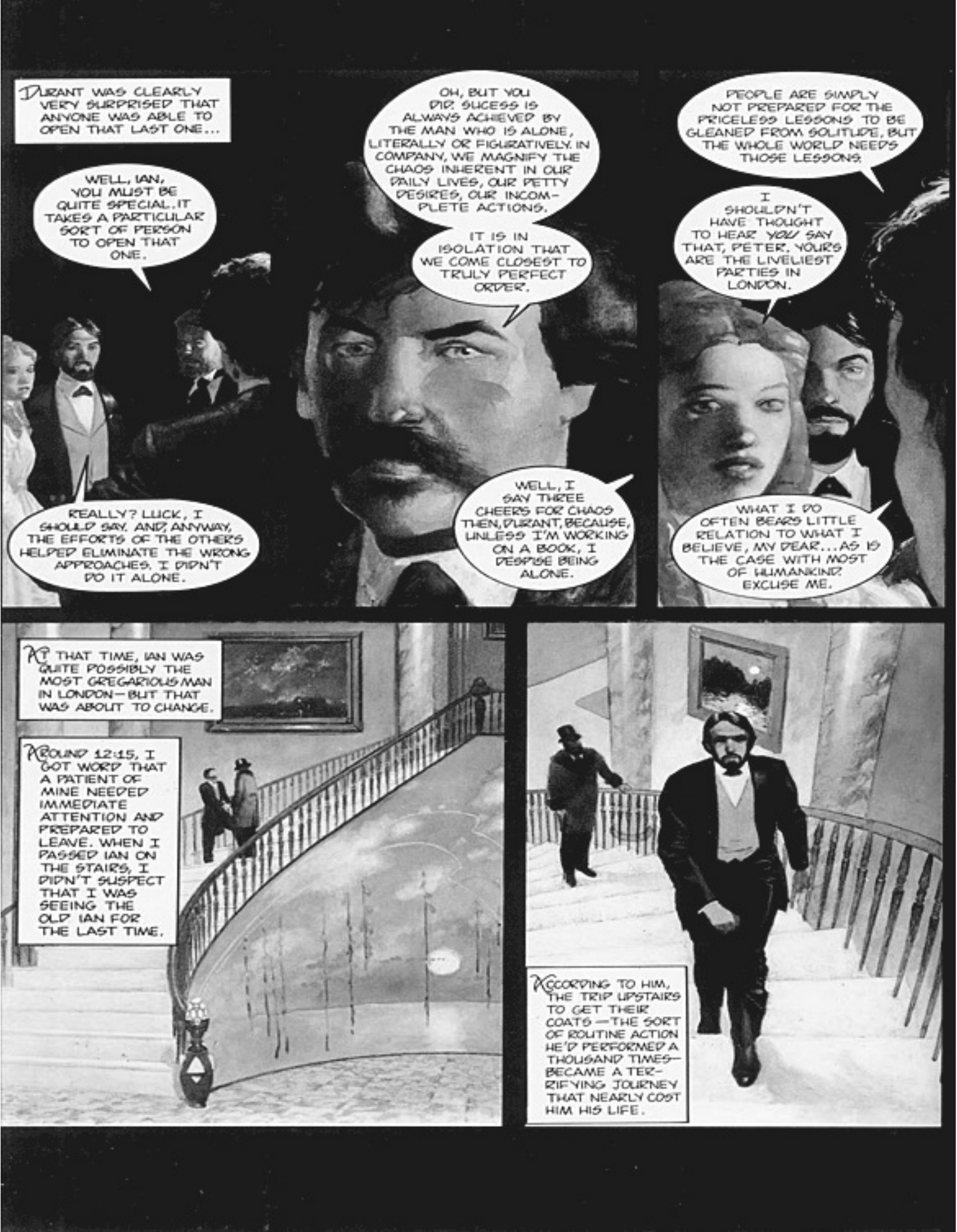
painted by
Scott Hampton

lettered by
Tracy Hampton-Munso

in memory of
Bernie Krigstein

ANDREW! THOUGHT YOU'D GONE BACK. OR ARE THERE STILL SOME EARS YOU HAVEN'T BENT ABOUT THOSE BLACKGUARD BLOCKADE RUNNERS IN CHARLESTON?
SO, FRATERNAL JEALOUSY REARS ITS LUMPY HEAD AT LAST! WELL, I CAN'T SAY I'M SURPRISED. MY YEARS IN THE STATES HAVE GIVEN ME SOCIAL COLLATERAL GREATER THAN DISRAELI'S. IT'S ONLY NATURAL THAT YOU SHOULD SQUIRM WITH ENVY.
HA!
HERE, NOW. I'VE BEEN TRYING TO GET YOU ASIDE FOR AN HOUR, JOHN. TELL ME ABOUT THIS WOOLRICH FELLOW AND HIS WIFE. HE NEVER LEAVES OFF— HOLDS ONTO HER LIKE A £20 NOTE. EXCEEDINGLY ODD.
NOT IF YOU KNOW HIS STORY. IAN WOOLRICH'S VERY PRESENCE HERE TONIGHT IS STRANGER THAN HIS CLINGING BEHAVIOR. UNTIL RECENTLY, HE AND CATHY HADN'T LEFT THEIR HOUSE FOR NEARLY SEVEN YEARS.
SEVEN YEARS! I HOPE THEY LIVE IN BUCKINGHAM PALACE THEN. LORD, I'D GO MAD!
HE VERY NEARLY DID.

IF YOU THINK I'M GOING TO BEG YOU TO TELL ME ABOUT THEM, YOU'RE QUITE WRONG. I'M BORED, TRUE, BUT I'M PROUD.
YOU NEEDN'T BEG, OLD FELLOW. I'LL TELL YOU, AND I'LL BEGIN WITH A FACT YOU WILL HARDLY CREDIT.
MANY TIMES A DAY, YOU DO, WITH GREAT EASE, SOMETHING THAT IAN HASN'T DONE IN SEVEN YEARS — YOU WALK INTO CLOSED ROOMS.
IT WAS SEVEN YEARS AGO AT A NEW YEAR'S EVE PARTY GIVEN BY PETER DURANT. TOO BAD YOU NEVER KNEW HIM; HE COULD'VE WARDED OFF YOUR BOREDOM FOR HOURS AT A TIME WITH THAT PUZZLE COLLECTION OF HIS.
HE AMUSED HIS GUESTS WITH PUZZLES OF EVERY SORT, AND THAT NIGHT WE'D MANAGED TO SOLVE FOUR OF THE FIVE HE'D BROUGHT OUT, BUT NO ONE HAD FATHOMED THE WORKINGS OF THE FIFTH ONE.
THE PUZZLE CAME AROUND TO IAN SHORTLY BEFORE MIDNIGHT AND, AS EASILY AS IF HE'D BEEN BORN DOING IT, HE OPENED IT JUST AS THE NEW YEAR ARRIVED.


DURANT WAS CLEARLY VERY SURPRISED THAT ANYONE WAS ABLE TO OPEN THAT LAST ONE...
WELL, IAN, YOU MUST BE QUITE SPECIAL. IT TAKES A PARTICULAR SORT OF PERSON TO OPEN THAT ONE.
REALLY? LUCK, I SHOULD SAY. AND, ANYWAY, THE EFFORTS OF THE OTHERS HELPED ELIMINATE THE WRONG APPROACHES. I DIDN'T DO IT ALONE.
OH, BUT YOU DID. SUCESS IS ALWAYS ACHIEVED BY THE MAN WHO IS ALONE, LITERALLY OR FIGURATIVELY. IN COMPANY, WE MAGNIFY THE CHAOS INHERENT IN OUR DAILY LIVES, OUR PETTY DESIRES, OUR INCOMPLETE ACTIONS.
IT IS IN ISOLATION THAT WE COME CLOSEST TO TRULY PERFECT ORDER.
WELL, I SAY THREE CHEERS FOR CHAOS THEN, DURANT, BECAUSE, UNLESS I'M WORKING ON A BOOK, I DESPISE BEING ALONE.
PEOPLE ARE SIMPLY NOT PREPARED FOR THE PRICELESS LESSONS TO BE GLEANED FROM SOLITUDE, BUT THE WHOLE WORLD NEEDS THOSE LESSONS.
I SHOULDN'T HAVE THOUGHT TO HEAR YOU SAY THAT, PETER. YOURS ARE THE LIVELIEST PARTIES IN LONDON.
WHAT I DO OFTEN BEARS LITTLE RELATION TO WHAT I BELIEVE, MY DEAR... AS IS THE CASE WITH MOST OF HUMANKIND. EXCUSE ME.
AT THAT TIME, IAN WAS QUITE POSSIBLY THE MOST GREGARIOUS MAN IN LONDON—BUT THAT WAS ABOUT TO CHANGE.
AROUND 12:15, I GOT WORD THAT A PATIENT OF MINE NEEDED IMMEDIATE ATTENTION AND PREPARED TO LEAVE. WHEN I PASSED IAN ON THE STAIRS, I DIDN'T SUSPECT THAT I WAS SEEING THE OLD IAN FOR THE LAST TIME.
ACCORDING TO HIM, THE TRIP UPSTAIRS TO GET THEIR COATS—THE SORT OF ROUTINE ACTION HE'D PERFORMED A THOUSAND TIMES—BECAME A TERRIFYING JOURNEY THAT NEARLY COST HIM HIS LIFE.

In an upstairs bedroom, as he searched through the closet, he heard the door behind him close and looked to see who had come in.

CLICK!

Finding no one there, he attributed the door's closing to a draught and turned to leave.

When he opened the door, he was greeted, not by the ornate wallpaper of the Durants' hallway, but by an unfamiliar room, black as jet except for a lighted, golden door.

Confused, certain that he'd made some simple, though unaccountable mistake, he turned back to the bedroom to find the hall door — and discovered that the bedroom had vanished and he was surrounded by darkness.

The palpable blackness seemed to gather about him in an evil caress.

Quickly, he moved to the golden door, assuming that it was, after all, the way back to the stairs.

Grabbing the knob, he threw the door open...

...ONTO MORE OF THE PENETRATING DARKNESS, RELIEVED ONLY BY ANOTHER GOLDEN DOOR GLEAMING AHEAD OF HIM, THIS ONE FARTHER AWAY.

WHIRLING ABOUT TO RETURN THROUGH THE FIRST DOOR, HE FOUND HIMSELF STARING INTO EMPTY DARKNESS.

THE DOOR HE'D JUST COME THROUGH WAS GONE, LEAVING HIM CUT OFF FROM ANY HOPE OF RETURNING IN THAT DIRECTION.

HIS HEART POUNDING IN THE SILENT, OPPRESSIVE BLACKNESS, HE GROPED ABOUT WILDLY, BUT MET WITH NOTHING — NO WALLS, NO FURNITURE — BY WHICH TO ORIENT HIMSELF.

FEARING THE VOID THAT SURROUNDED HIM AND NATURALLY DRAWN TO THE ONLY LIGHT REMAINING TO HIM, HE MOVED TOWARD THE NEXT DOOR.

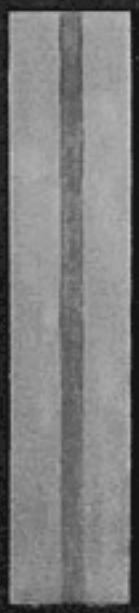
BUT BEFORE HE EVEN TURNED THE HANDLE, HE WAS FILLED WITH THE SICKENING CERTAINTY THAT ONLY MORE OF THE HIDEOUS DARKNESS WOULD BE FOUND ON THE OTHER SIDE.

AND HE WAS NOT WRONG.

THE ONLY DIFFERENCE WAS THAT, THIS TIME, THE NEXT DOOR WAS MUCH FARTHER AWAY—HALF A CITY BLOCK OR MORE.

AND ONCE AGAIN THE DOOR BEHIND HIM HAD DISAPPEARED.

INSPIRED BY TERROR, HE BEGAN FOR THE FIRST TIME TO RUN—AS IF CONQUERING THE GREATER DISTANCE MORE QUICKLY MIGHT MAKE IT LESS FRIGHTENING.



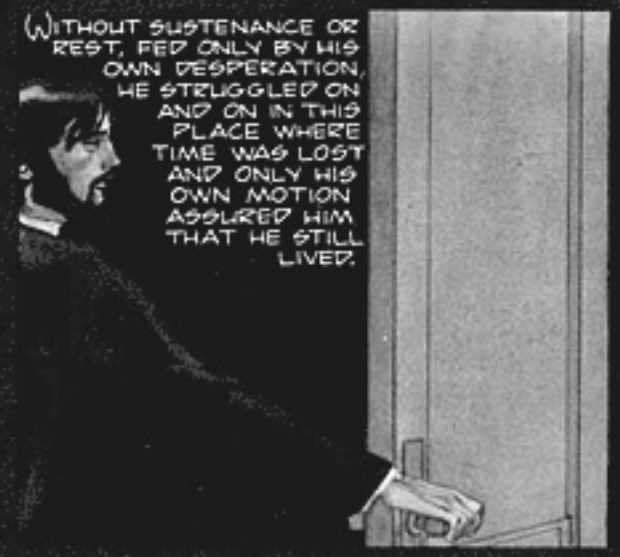
BUT HIS FEAR WAS ONLY MAGNIFIED WITH EACH SUCCESSIVE DOOR...

...FARTHER AND FARTHER FROM THE LAST.

STUMBLING, WALKING, RUNNING THROUGH THE HOURS AND THE DOORS, HE TRIED TO MAKE HIMSELF STOP, MAKE HIMSELF THINK OF ANOTHER WAY, OF SOME REASONABLE EXPLANATION. BUT NOTHING IN THAT GRIM DARKNESS BESPOKE REASON OR A METHOD THAT COULD BE FERRETED OUT.

HE KNEW, AS SURELY AS IF HE'D BEEN TOLD, THAT EVIL OF A FANTASTIC MAGNITUDE WAS HIS COMPANION ON THIS JOURNEY AND THAT IT RESISTED ANY ANALYSIS.

WITHOUT SUSTENANCE OR REST, FED ONLY BY HIS OWN DESPERATION, HE STRUGGLED ON AND ON IN THIS PLACE WHERE TIME WAS LOST AND ONLY HIS OWN MOTION ASSURED HIM THAT HE STILL LIVED.



UNSURE AT TIMES WHETHER HE WAS CONSCIOUS OR UNCONSCIOUS, MOVING OR STILL, HE UNDERSTOOD THAT HE HAD NO OBJECTIVE MEANS OF KNOWING REALITY. MORE REAL TO HIM, IN A SENSE, THAN EVEN HIS OWN MOVEMENTS WAS THE UNDENIABLE, ALMOST TANGIBLE PRESENCE OF A MALIGN AND CONSCIENCELESS POWER.

HIS IMPLACABLE FEAR OF THIS INVISIBLE PRESENCE WAS HEIGHTENED BY A DEEP AND DESPAIRING DREAD OF GOING ON THIS WAY, ENTIRELY ALONE, UNTIL DEATH OVERTOOK HIM.

AND WHAT IF EVEN THE UNWELCOME ESCAPE OF DEATH ELUDED HIM?

WHAT IF HE WERE DOOMED TO TRAVEL THIS HELL ETERNALLY WITHOUT RELEASE?

DISJOINTED THOUGHTS BEGAN TO ASSAIL HIS GRIM REVERIE, PUSHING ASIDE THE UNTHINKABLE HORROR OF A TREK THROUGH AN ETERNAL VOID.

HE THOUGHT DISTRACTEDLY OF *IO AND ATALANTA*, HIS MOST RECENT BOOK— THE NEARLY FINISHED MANUSCRIPT LYING ON HIS DESK AT HOME...

...OF THE FRAGILE ANTIQUE PIPE HIS FATHER HAD GIVEN HIM...

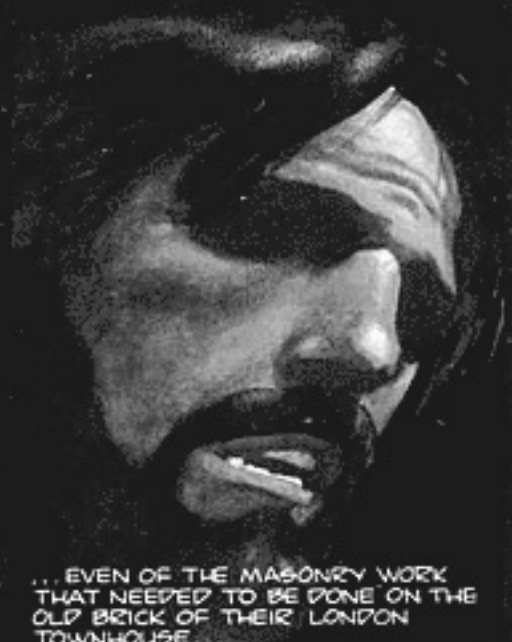
...OF HIS LOVELY WIFE AND HOW CONCERNED SHE MUST BE...

...OF THE FACT THAT THEY HAD NEVER HAD CHILDREN AND HOW MUCH COMFORT THEY MIGHT HAVE BEEN TO CATHY IF HE WERE NEVER TO RETURN...

BUT HIS OWN WANING STRENGTH PUT AN END TO THESE THOUGHTS. EVERY IOTA OF ENERGY HE INVESTED IN TRYING TO AMBUSH HIS DREAD WAS ENERGY SUBTRACTED FROM HIS ABILITY TO KEEP MOVING.

HE STUMBLED MORE, FELL MORE WHEN HE TRIED TO REMOVE HIMSELF MENTALLY FROM HIS SURROUNDINGS.

HE FOUND HE HAD TO CONCENTRATE ON EACH STEP NOW IN ORDER TO GO ON.



...EVEN OF THE MASONRY WORK THAT NEEDED TO BE DONE ON THE OLD BRICK OF THEIR LONDON TOWNHOUSE...

AND ULTIMATELY HE WAS SURE THAT GOING ON WAS NO LONGER POSSIBLE.

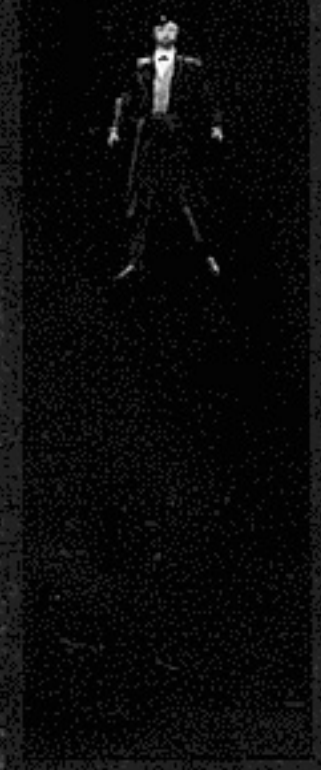
THE DOOR THAT FACED HIM NOW WAS SO FAR AWAY THAT IT WAS ONLY THE MEREST DUST SPECK OF LIGHT, BARELY VISIBLE TO THE UNAIDED EYE.

COULD IT BE MILES AWAY?

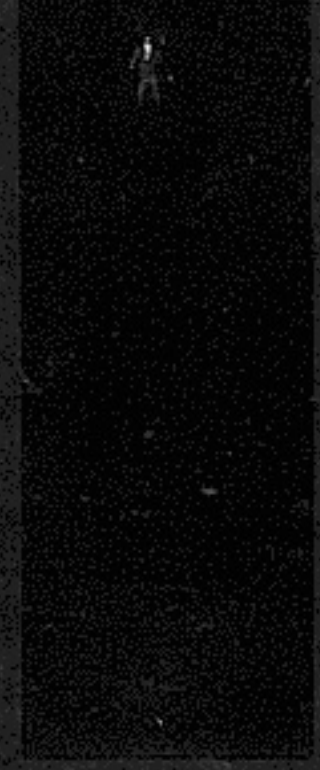
OR FAR AS A STAR?

WAS IT POSSIBLE FOR HIM TO SEE MILES AHEAD OF HIM?

WAS THERE ANY WAY FOR HIS TORTURED BODY TO CARRY HIM FORWARD ACROSS THAT HUGE DISTANCE?



AND IF HE *DID* MAKE IT, HOW IN GOD'S NAME COULD HE HOPE TO MAKE IT TO THE ONE AFTER *THAT*?



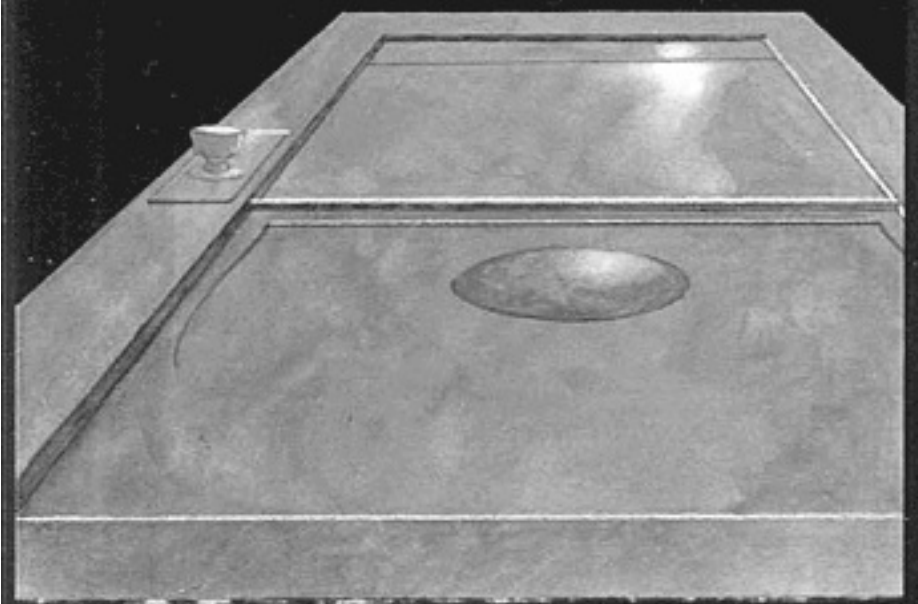
AND THEN HE KNEW. HE KNEW WITH A CERTAINTY BORN NOT OF HIS OWN HOPELESSNESS, BUT A CERTAINTY BORNE IN UPON HIM FROM WITHOUT, THAT THIS WAS THE LAST DOOR, THE ONE THAT WOULD DECIDE HIS FATE.

THAT BEYOND IT LAY UNENDING DARKNESS. DARKNESS UNMARKED BY ANYTHING AT ALL.

AND THAT REACHING IT WOULD, FOR GOOD OR ILL, END HIS JOURNEY.

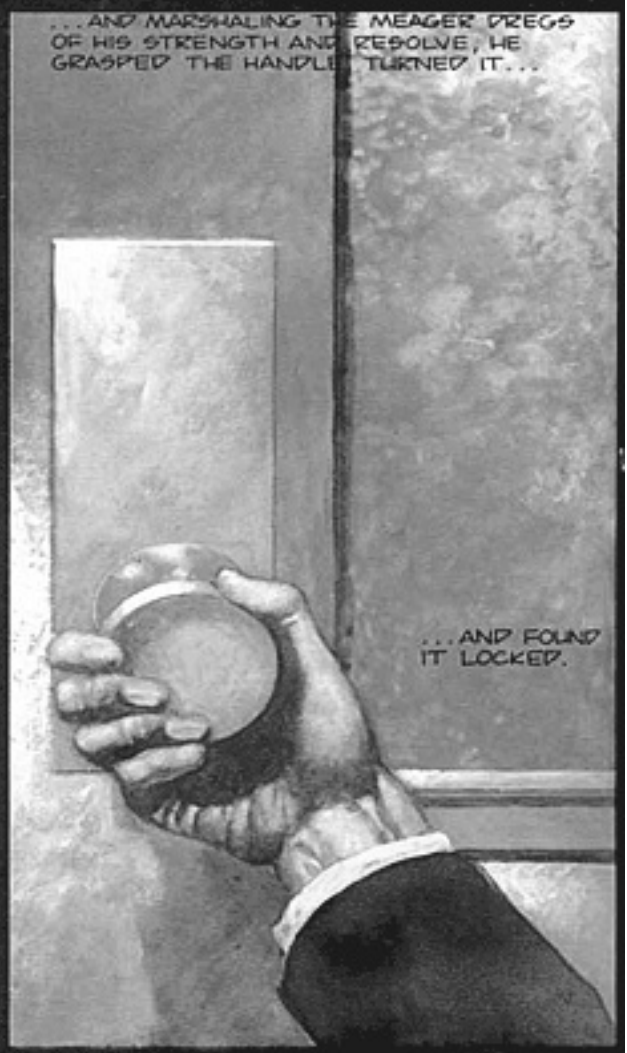
IN THE FINAL HOURS OF HIS DETERMINED STUGGLE, TOO WEAK FOR RAGE, STRONG ENOUGH ONLY TO HARKEN TO THE PROMPTINGS OF THAT COLD, INSINUATING DREAD, HE CRAWLED AND DRAGGED HIMSELF ACROSS A VAST FLOOR OF DARKNESS, SEEMING TO REDUCE THE DISTANCE TO THE DOOR ONLY BY INCHES WITH EACH PASSING HOUR.

REDUCED TO A STATE OF WEAKNESS SHORT OF DEATH BY THE MEREST IMAGINABLE FRACTION, HE FINALLY REACHED THAT DOOR...



...AND MARSHALING THE MEAGER DREGS OF HIS STRENGTH AND RESOLVE, HE GRASPED THE HANDLE, TURNED IT...

...AND FOUND IT LOCKED.

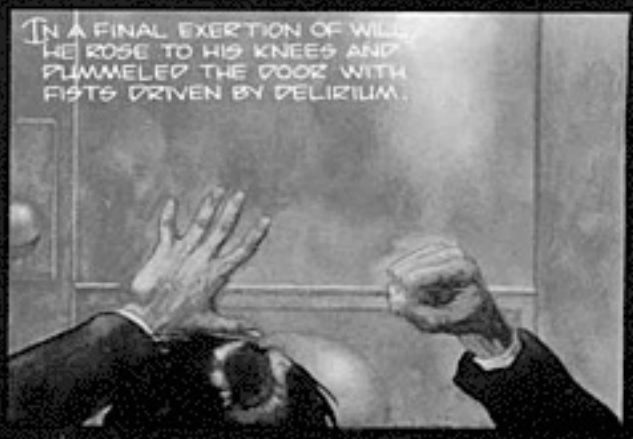


CRUMPLING TO THE FLOOR, HE WEPT IN DESPERATION.

WAS THIS IT, THEN? THE END OF HIS JOURNEY? WAS HE TO DIE HERE, SPLAYED AND PROPPED LIKE A DISCARDED PUPPET AGAINST THIS HELLISH DOOR?

HE COULD NOT GO BACK. THERE WAS NO "BACK". AND EVEN IF THERE WERE, HE COULD NOT LIVE LONG ENOUGH TO RETRACE HIS FEVERED JOURNEY.

IN A FINAL EXERTION OF WILL, HE ROSE TO HIS KNEES AND PUMMELED THE DOOR WITH FISTS DRIVEN BY DELIRIUM.



ON WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 4TH, THREE DAYS AFTER IAN'S DISAPPEARANCE THE WOOLRICH'S COOK, NAN, WAS STARTLED OUT OF HER WITS BY AN UNACCOUNTABLE BANGING FROM A KITCHEN CUPBOARD. SHE RAN FOR HARKNESS, THE MANSERVANT, WHO RETURNED, POKER IN HAND, TO DISPATCH THE INTRUDER.

IMAGINE THEIR ASTONISHMENT WHEN HARKNESS THREW OPEN THE DOOR AND THE MASTER FELL HEADLONG TO THE FLOOR AT THEIR FEET!

IAN HAD BEEN MISSING FOR DAYS. WHEN HE APPEARED SO UNACCOUNTABLY IN HIS OWN KITCHEN, NO ONE KNEW WHAT TO MAKE OF HIS ABSENCE, AND HE WAS IN NO CONDITION TO EXPLAIN IT. HAD HE BEEN IN THE DAMNED CUPBOARD ALL THAT TIME? HAD HE SUFFERED AN ATTACK OF AMNESIA? HAD SOME SUBTLE POISON UNBALANCED HIS REASON?

HE TEETERED FOR WEEKS ON THE BRINK OF DEATH; SINCE WE'RE NEIGHBORS, I SAW HIM RATHER MORE OFTEN THAN I WOULD NORMALLY SEE A PATIENT, AND EACH VISIT GAVE ME LESS REASON TO HOPE FOR A FULL RECOVERY.

HE DID FINALLY REGAIN CONSCIOUSNESS, BUT HE RETURNED TO THE WORLD A FELLOW SO DEEPLY CHANGED THAT EVEN HIS WIFE WONDERED IF THIS WERE ONLY A MAN WHO LOOKED LIKE IAN.

HE HAD BEEN DRAINED OF ANY SEMBLANCE OF INDEPENDENCE OR ASSERTION.

HE WOULD NOT LET CATHY LEAVE HIM FOR EVEN A MOMENT, AND HE DID NOT STIR FROM THAT BEDROOM FOR OVER A YEAR.

ULTIMATELY, HE CAME AROUND ENOUGH TO VENTURE FORTH IN HIS OWN HOUSE, BUT ONLY WITH CATHY ON HIS ARM, ACCOMPANYING HIM THROUGH EVERY DOORWAY AND INTO EVERY ROOM.

IT WAS DURING THIS TIME THAT HE TOLD ME THE STORY I'VE TOLD YOU. HE ASKED ME TO FIND DURANT AND THE PUZZLE BOX, AND WHEN I TOLD HIM DURANT HAD LEFT THE CITY MONTHS BEFORE, HIS HARD-WON COMPOSURE CRUMBLED. HE BEGAN MUMBLING TO HIMSELF, AS IF CATHY AND I WEREN'T THERE.

I GATHERED FROM HIS RAMBLING THAT HE WAS SURE THE PUZZLE WAS THE KEY TO HIS SITUATION AND THAT DURANT'S REMARKS ABOUT SOLITUDE HAD BEEN NOT MERELY BITS OF PARTY CONVERSATION, BUT A WARNING TO IAN NOT TO RESUME HIS OLD LIFESTYLE OF SOCIAL CONTACT. HE BELIEVED THAT A MALIGN FORCE HAD TORMENTED HIM, THAT IT STILL WATCHED HIM, AND THAT HE COULD APPEASE IT ONLY BY REMAINING ISOLATED FROM THE OUTSIDE WORLD.

SOMEHOW IAN AND CATHY ADJUSTED TO THE BIZARRE LIFESTYLE IMPOSED ON THEM BY HIS TERROR AND HIS "PENANCE". THEY DRIFTED INTO YEARS OF ISOLATION—IAN IN THE GRIP OF HIS DELUSION, CATHY FORTIFIED BY HER DEVOTION TO HIM.

IT WAS ONLY RECENTLY THAT THEY RE-APPEARED IN PUBLIC FOR THE FIRST TIME. MY GOD, HE SACRIFICED *SEVEN YEARS!* SURELY HE BELIEVES NOW THAT HE'S MADE AMPLE PAYMENT TO HIS DEMONS.

NOW THAT THEY'VE BEGUN TO GO OUT, I SUPPOSE THE GOSSIP ABOUT HIM WILL BEGIN AGAIN, BUT NO ONE KNOWS WHAT REALLY HAPPENED TO IAN SEVEN YEARS AGO.

AND THERE YOU HAVE HIS STORY. WHAT DO YOU MAKE OF IT?

I'M NOT CERTAIN. I SHOULD LIKE TO BELIEVE IT, ACTUALLY.

I ONLY WISH IT HAD HAPPENED TO ME. WITH MATERIAL LIKE THAT, MY DINNER GUEST VALUE WOULD SOAR, AND I COULD GIVE THE WAR IN AMERICA A REST.

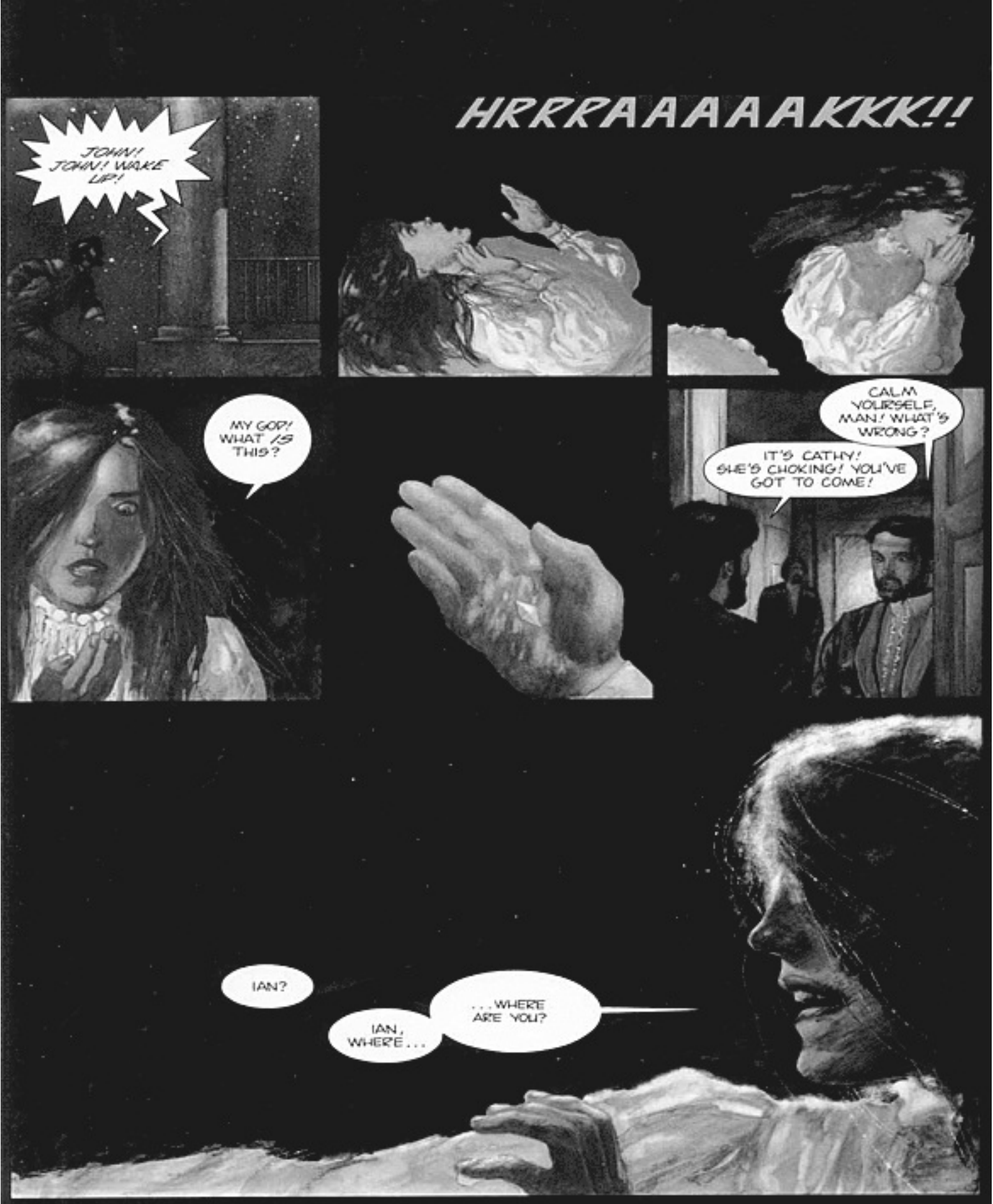
I SUPPOSE OUR ABSENCE HAS STRAINED THE BOUNDS OF CIVILITY BY NOW, ANDREW. SHALL WE?

BY ALL MEANS. BUT JUST TO BE ON THE SAFE SIDE—*AFTER* YOU, MY DEAR FELLOW.

AHEMMMM!
SOMETHING WRONG, DEAR?
NO, JUST A TICKLE. IT'S NOTHING.
SEVEN YEARS CERTAINLY HAVEN'T CHANGED THE BURKES, HAVE THEY? STILL TRAVELING. EIGHT MONTHS OUT OF THE YEAR. THEY'RE OFF TO SCOTLAND NEXT WEEK.
AND WE LEAVE FOR THE LAKES TOMORROW.
WHAT?
WE'LL TAKE OVERNIGHT BAGS AND HAVE COOK SEND THE LUGGAGE ON.
AFTER TONIGHT VENTURING OUT IN THE WORLD DOESN'T SEEM QUITE SO FRIGHTENING...
...AS LONG AS YOU'RE WITH ME.
OH, DARLING!

HRAAAAKK!
DARLING! WHAT'S WRONG??
HARRAKK!
HRAK!
CATHY! CATHY! OH, MY GOD!
I... AGGHHHH...
I'M GOING TO GET JOHN!
GOD!
I CAN'T...

IAN?
HRRAKK—
HRAK!!
CLICK!


JOHN! JOHN! WAKE UP!
HRRRAAAAAKKK!!
MY GOD! WHAT IS THIS?
CALM YOURSELF, MAN! WHAT'S WRONG?
IT'S CATHY! SHE'S CHOKING! YOU'VE GOT TO COME!
IAN?
IAN, WHERE...
...WHERE ARE YOU?

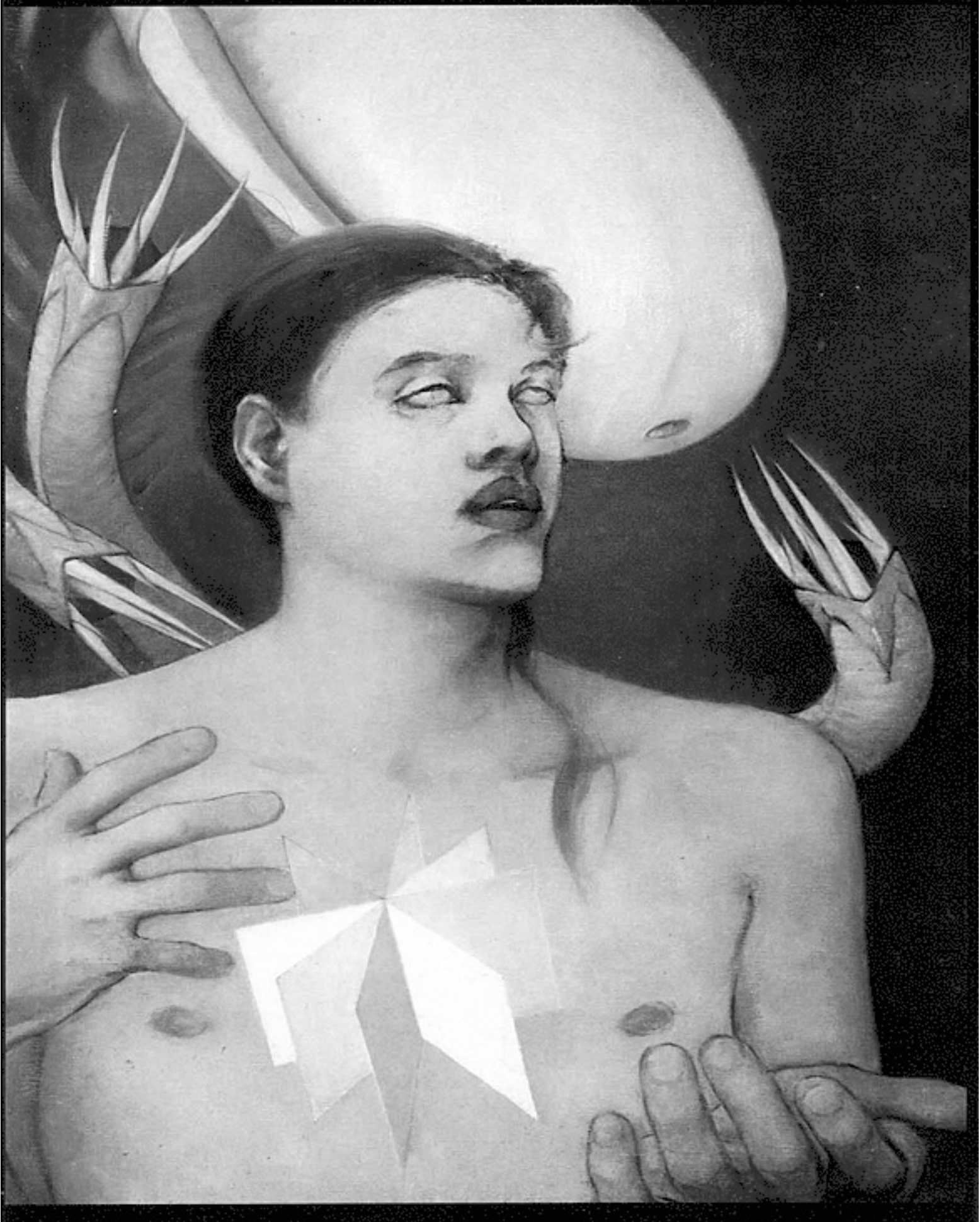
WHAT IN THE WORLD...
GOD, PLEASE DON'T LET HIM GO AGAIN...
CATHY!
CA...

IAN!
NO, DARLING!
NOOOO!!
DEAR LORD!

ALONE...

...ALONE...

The End



THE FACE. I NEEDED FAGIN'S FACE.
THE FACE WAS THE MIRROR OF THE SPIRIT. WITHOUT THE FACE, I HAD NOTHING--NOTHING OF THE MAN!
THAT NIGHT, I'D HAVE SOLD MY SOUL FOR THE UNIQUE COMBINATION OF PAINT AND PENCIL THAT RENDERED FAGIN'S CONTEMPTUOUS EYES IN MY MIRROR!

TO PREPARE A FACE

HOLLYW
SET 36A OLIVER TWIST
WE WOULD BEGIN FILMING OLIVER TWIST THE NEXT MORNING. FAGIN, DICKENS' MISCREANT JEW--WHERE WAS HE? WHERE WAS HIS FACE?
WHY DID IT ALWAYS HAVE TO BE THIS WAY? WHY DID I ALWAYS HAVE TO ENDURE THIS TORMENT? WHY MUST I BE THE ONE TO SHOULDER THE BURDEN OF OBSESSION?
STORY • Jan Strnad
ART • Mark Chiarello
LETTERS • Gaspar

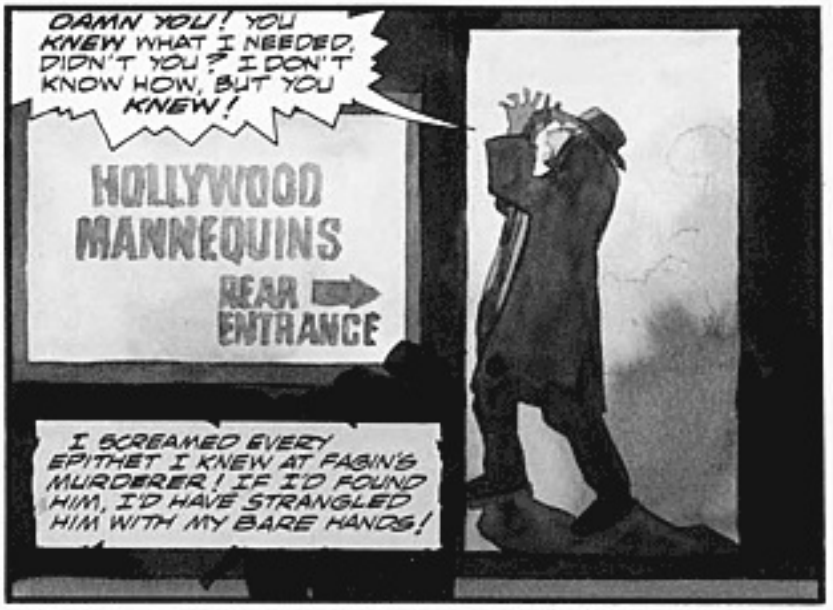
KNOCK KNOCK
NOBODY'S HOME BUT US GHOSTS! GO AWAY!
ROOM SERVICE. SOMEBODY IN HERE ORDER A DRINK?
IT WAS PATTY. SHE'D SEEM ME THIS WAY BEFORE. SHE KNEW THE HELL I WAS GOING THROUGH.
WHAT DO YOU THINK? IS IT FAGIN?
WELL... IT COULD BE--
I KNOW. I DETEST IT TOO.
I NEED FAGIN, PATTY. I NEED TO GET INSIDE HIS SKIN.
CAN'T YOU FAKE IT, JUST THIS ONCE? WHO'LL KNOW?
GOLD CREAM

THEY'D ALL KNOW. EVERY PAIR OF BRIGHT EYES IN THAT DARK HOUSE--
--THE CAMERA MAKES A LOVER OUT OF EVERY ONE OF THEM. THEY'D KNOW, YOU CAN BET ON THAT!
KEEP THE BOTTLE. IF ANYONE ASKS FOR ME, TELL THEM I'M OUT... LOOKING FOR FAGIN.
THEN I'LL SEE YOU BOTH TOMORROW MORNING, BRIGHT AND EARLY.
YOUR OPTIMISM INSPIRES US ALL, PATRICIA.
Quick-Nrgo Energy
Post Toasties
Corn Flakes
"THE GOLD RUSH"
GAS
Chaplin
6¢
I HAUNTED THE STREETS IN MOUNTING DESPERATION.
EVERY ROLE DEMANDS AN INROAD. A GESTURE, A COSTUME--ANYTHING MAY PROVIDE AN ACTOR THE ACCESS HE NEEDS TO A CHARACTER'S MIND.
MY INROAD WAS... ALWAYS HAD BEEN... THE FACE!

I SCRUTINIZED EVERY FACE THAT PASSED HOPING TO SEE THE ONE I NEEDED--
--PEERING, SEARCHING, PRAYING FOR THE BRIEFEST GLIMPSE OF MY FAGIN.
PATTY KNEW I'D NEVER "FAKE IT," NOT LIKE SOME ACTORS I COULD NAME! BUT WITHOUT THE FACE, I WAS NOWHERE!
WITHOUT THE FACE, I WAS LOST... DRIFTING... RUDDERLESS IN UNCHARTED SEAS!
BY DEGREES THE STREETS EMPTIED AND FELL SILENT.
SOON I WOULD FACE THAT HIDEOUS, ALL-SEEING EYE. IT WOULD STARE INTO MY HOLLOWNESS, AND I WOULD STAND NAKED, MY FRAUDULENCE EXPOSED TO THE WORLD!
PARDON ME.
I BARELY GLIMPSED HIS FACE AS HE PASSED. IN AN INSTANT HE WAS GONE, SWALLOWED BY THE SHADOWS.

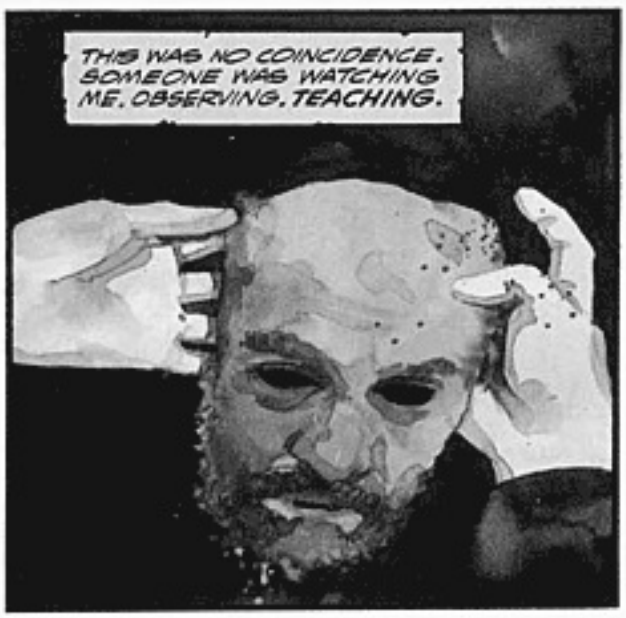
FAGIN!
SHIRTS
HE COULDN'T HAVE GONE FAR. IF ONLY HE'D KNOWN HOW BADLY I NEEDED HIM...AND HIS FACE!
HOLLYWOOD MANNEQUINS
REAR ENTRANCE
THE ALLEY LED TO A MANNEQUIN SHOP. FROM THE OPEN DOOR A SOUNDLESS EXPLOSION OF LIGHT POURED OUT--
--BLINDING--
--AND WHEN IT SUBSIDED, I FOUND THE MAN'S CORPSE, A LIFELESS SHELL AMONG LIFELESS SHELLS.

WHOEVER KILLED HIM HAD CUT OFF HIS FACE, REMOVED IT WITH THE SKILL OF A DEMENTED SURGEON.

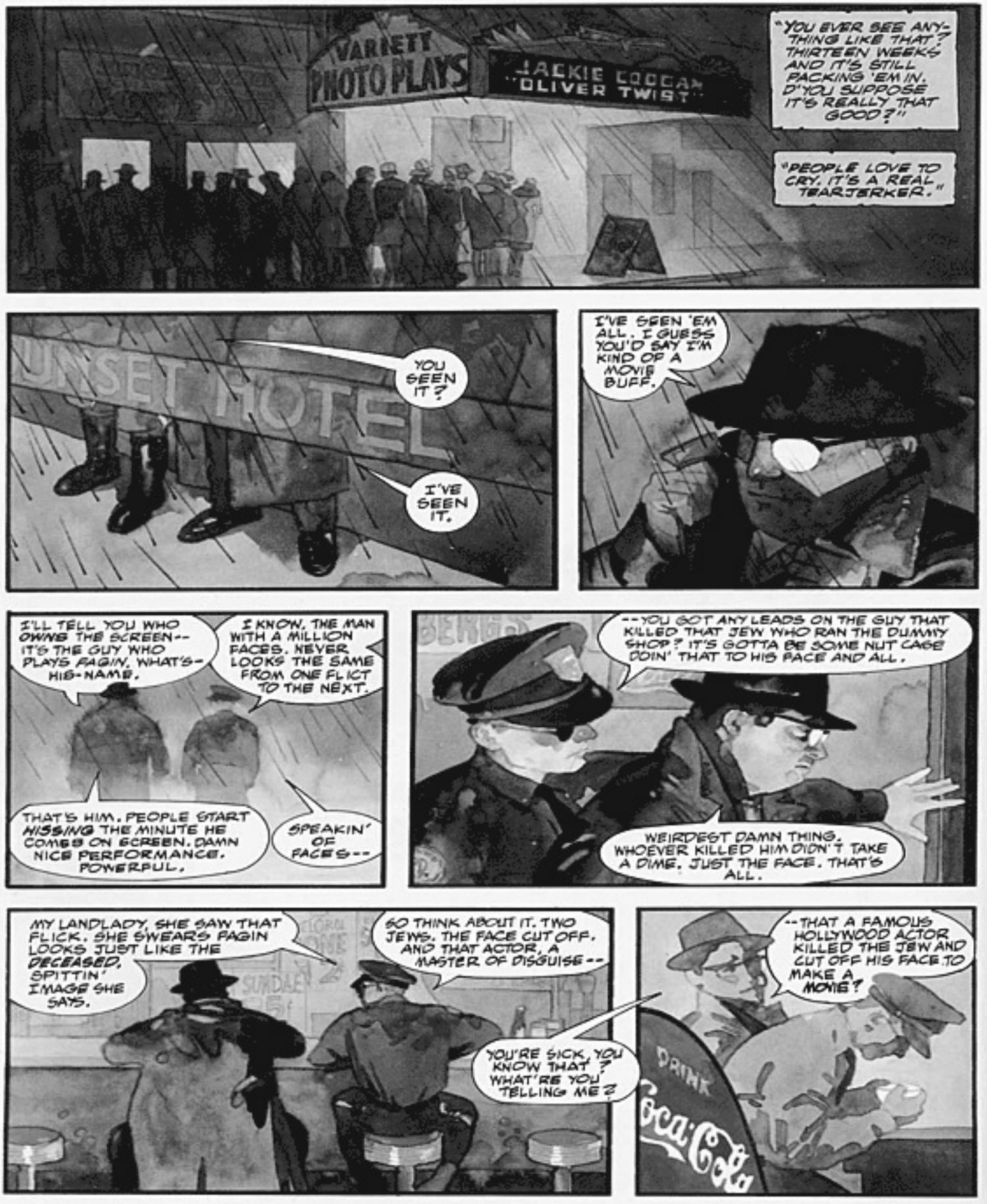

DAMN YOU! YOU KNEW WHAT I NEEDED, DIDN'T YOU? I DON'T KNOW HOW, BUT YOU KNEW!
HOLLYWOOD MANNEQUINS
REAR ENTRANCE
I SCREAMED EVERY EPITHET I KNEW AT FAGIN'S MURDERER! IF I'D FOUND HIM, I'D HAVE STRANGLED HIM WITH MY BARE HANDS!

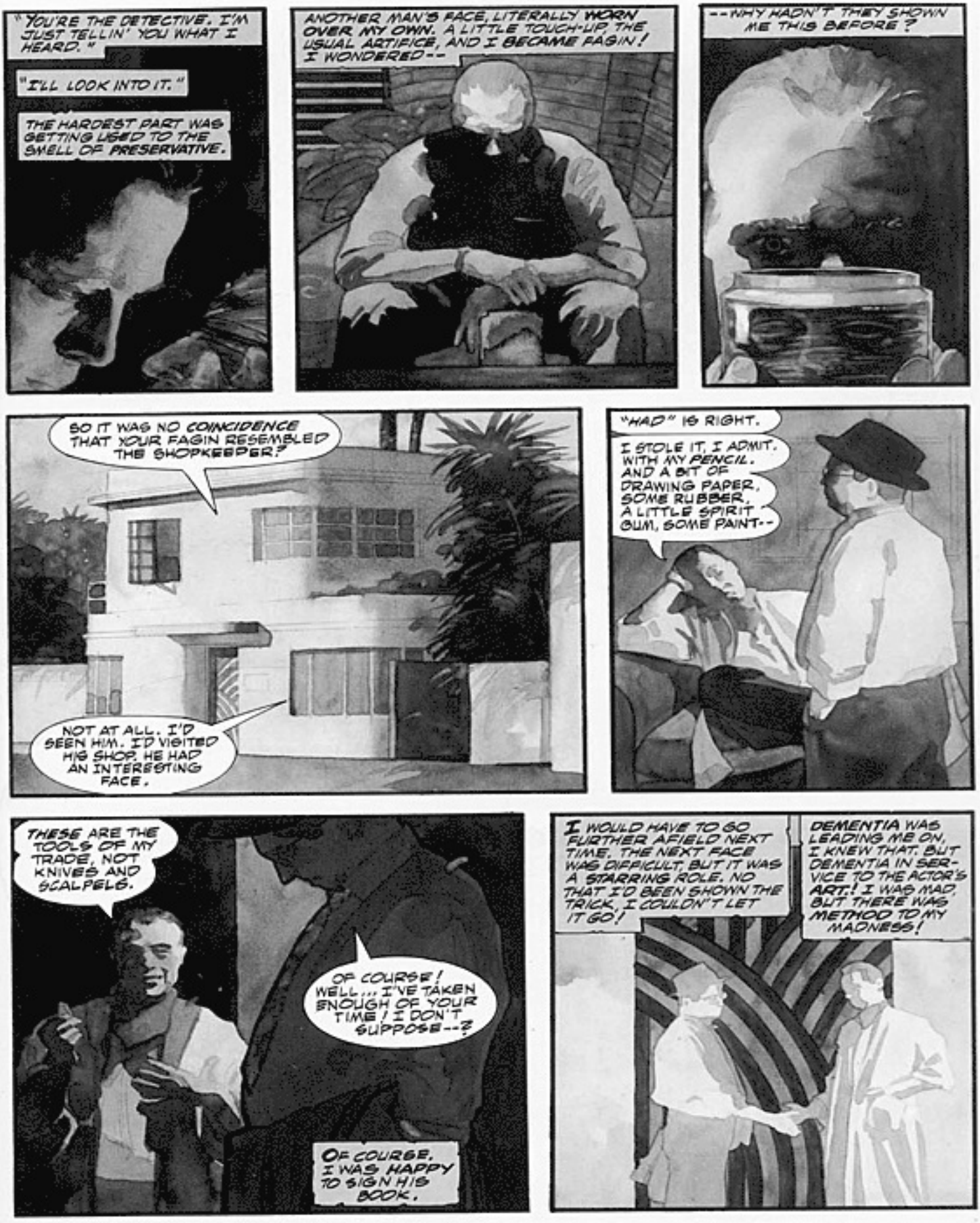
AND THEN I SAW IT. DANGLING FROM THE DAINTILY POISED HANDS OF A MANNEQUIN--

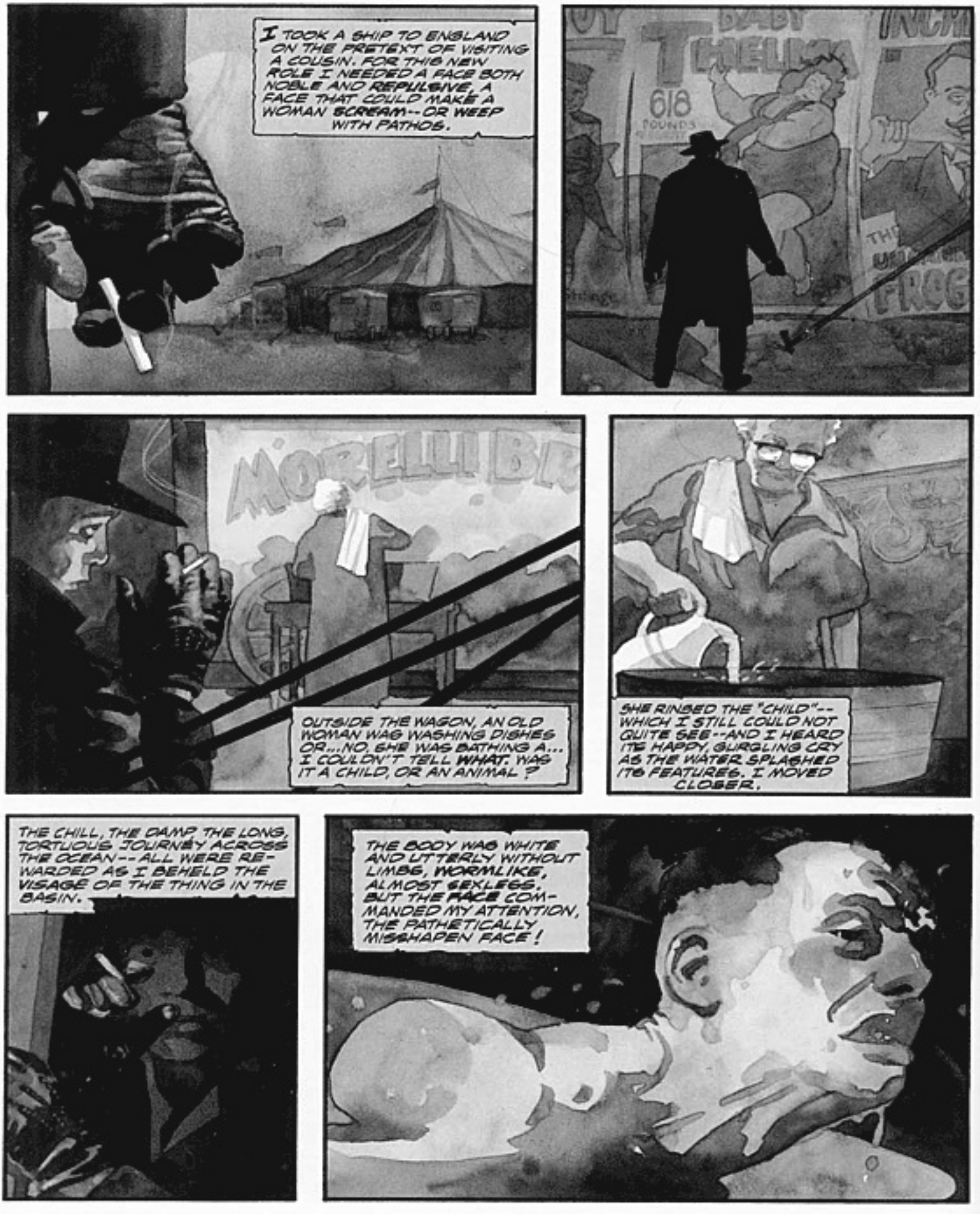
--THERE, SUSPENDED AT THE ENDS OF DELICATE WOODEN FINGERS--
--FAGIN'S FACE, DRAPED LIKE A MASK, LIKE A RUBBER HALLOWEEN MASK... AN OFFERING.


THIS WAS NO COINCIDENCE. SOMEONE WAS WATCHING ME. OBSERVING. TEACHING.

I WAS SAVED!


VARIETY
PHOTO PLAYS
JACKIE COOGAN
"OLIVER TWIST"
"YOU EVER SEE ANY-THING LIKE THAT? THIRTEEN WEEKS AND IT'S STILL PACKING 'EM IN. D'YOU SUPPOSE IT'S REALLY THAT GOOD?"
"PEOPLE LOVE TO CRY. IT'S A REAL TEARJERKER."
UNSET HOTEL
YOU SEEN IT?
I'VE SEEN IT.
I'VE SEEN 'EM ALL. I GUESS YOU'D SAY I'M KIND OF A MOVIE BUFF.
I'LL TELL YOU WHO OWNS THE SCREEN-- IT'S THE GUY WHO PLAYS FAGIN, WHAT'S-HIS-NAME.
I KNOW, THE MAN WITH A MILLION FACES. NEVER LOOKS THE SAME FROM ONE FLICT TO THE NEXT.
THAT'S HIM. PEOPLE START HISSING THE MINUTE HE COMES ON SCREEN. DAMN NICE PERFORMANCE. POWERFUL.
SPEAKIN' OF FACES--
--YOU GOT ANY LEADS ON THE GUY THAT KILLED THAT JEW WHO RAN THE DUMMY SHOP? IT'S GOTTA BE SOME NUT CASE DOIN' THAT TO HIS FACE AND ALL.
WEIRDEST DAMN THING. WHOEVER KILLED HIM DIDN'T TAKE A DIME. JUST THE FACE. THAT'S ALL.
MY LANDLADY, SHE SAW THAT FLICK. SHE SWEARS FAGIN LOOKS JUST LIKE THE DECEASED, SPITTIN' IMAGE SHE SAYS.
SO THINK ABOUT IT. TWO JEWS. THE FACE CUT OFF. AND THAT ACTOR, A MASTER OF DISGUISE--
YOU'RE SICK, YOU KNOW THAT? WHAT'RE YOU TELLING ME?
--THAT A FAMOUS HOLLYWOOD ACTOR KILLED THE JEW AND CUT OFF HIS FACE TO MAKE A MOVIE?
DRINK
Coca-Cola


"YOU'RE THE DETECTIVE. I'M JUST TELLIN' YOU WHAT I HEARD."
"I'LL LOOK INTO IT."
THE HARDEST PART WAS GETTING USED TO THE SMELL OF PRESERVATIVE.
ANOTHER MAN'S FACE, LITERALLY WORN OVER MY OWN. A LITTLE TOUCH-UP THE USUAL ARTIFICE, AND I BECAME FAGIN! I WONDERED--
--WHY HADN'T THEY SHOWN ME THIS BEFORE?
SO IT WAS NO COINCIDENCE THAT YOUR FAGIN RESEMBLED THE SHOPKEEPER?
NOT AT ALL. I'D SEEN HIM. I'D VISITED HIS SHOP. HE HAD AN INTERESTING FACE.
"HAD" IS RIGHT.
I STOLE IT, I ADMIT. WITH MY PENCIL. AND A BIT OF DRAWING PAPER, SOME RUBBER, A LITTLE SPIRIT GUM, SOME PAINT--
THESE ARE THE TOOLS OF MY TRADE, NOT KNIVES AND SCALPELS.
OF COURSE! WELL... I'VE TAKEN ENOUGH OF YOUR TIME! I DON'T SUPPOSE--?
OF COURSE, I WAS HAPPY TO SIGN HIS BOOK.
I WOULD HAVE TO GO FURTHER AFIELD NEXT TIME. THE NEXT FACE WAS DIFFICULT, BUT IT WAS A STARRING ROLE. NO THAT I'D BEEN SHOWN THE TRICK, I COULDN'T LET IT GO!
DEMENTIA WAS LEADING ME ON, I KNEW THAT. BUT DEMENTIA IN SERVICE TO THE ACTOR'S ART! I WAS MAD, BUT THERE WAS METHOD TO MY MADNESS!


I TOOK A SHIP TO ENGLAND ON THE PRETEXT OF VISITING A COUSIN. FOR THIS NEW ROLE I NEEDED A FACE BOTH NOBLE AND REPULSIVE, A FACE THAT COULD MAKE A WOMAN SCREAM--OR WEEP WITH PATHOS.
618
POUNDS
OUTSIDE THE WAGON, AN OLD WOMAN WAS WASHING DISHES OR...NO, SHE WAS BATHING A... I COULDN'T TELL WHAT. WAS IT A CHILD, OR AN ANIMAL?
SHE RINSED THE "CHILD"--WHICH I STILL COULD NOT QUITE SEE--AND I HEARD ITS HAPPY, GURGLING CRY AS THE WATER SPLASHED ITS FEATURES. I MOVED CLOSER.
THE CHILL, THE DAMP, THE LONG, TORTUOUS JOURNEY ACROSS THE OCEAN--ALL WERE REWARDED AS I BEHELD THE VISAGE OF THE THING IN THE BASIN.
THE BODY WAS WHITE AND UTTERLY WITHOUT LIMBS, WORMLIKE, ALMOST SEXLESS. BUT THE FACE COMMANDED MY ATTENTION, THE PATHETICALLY MISSHAPEN FACE!

THE LIMBLESS BODY CONVULSED HELPLESSLY WHILE I SUBMERGED THE HEAD. ITS DESPERATE GUTTURAL DYING NOISES WERE SWALLOWED IN THE MORNING MIST.
THE WOMAN LEFT TO FETCH WATER, LEAVING THE WRETCHED THING ALONE IN ITS BATH. I ACTED QUICKLY.

A TRAGIC ACCIDENT. THE OLD WOMAN WEPT, BLAMING HERSELF FOR THE TRAGEDY. THE SERVICE WAS SHORT, AND THE CARNIVAL SOON MOVED ON.

THAT NIGHT I EXHUMED THE CORPSE. THE POOR FREAK I'D MURDERED WOULD, IN A WAY, FIND IMMORTALITY AS MY GREATEST SCREEN PORTRAYAL TO DATE--!

QUASIMODO--

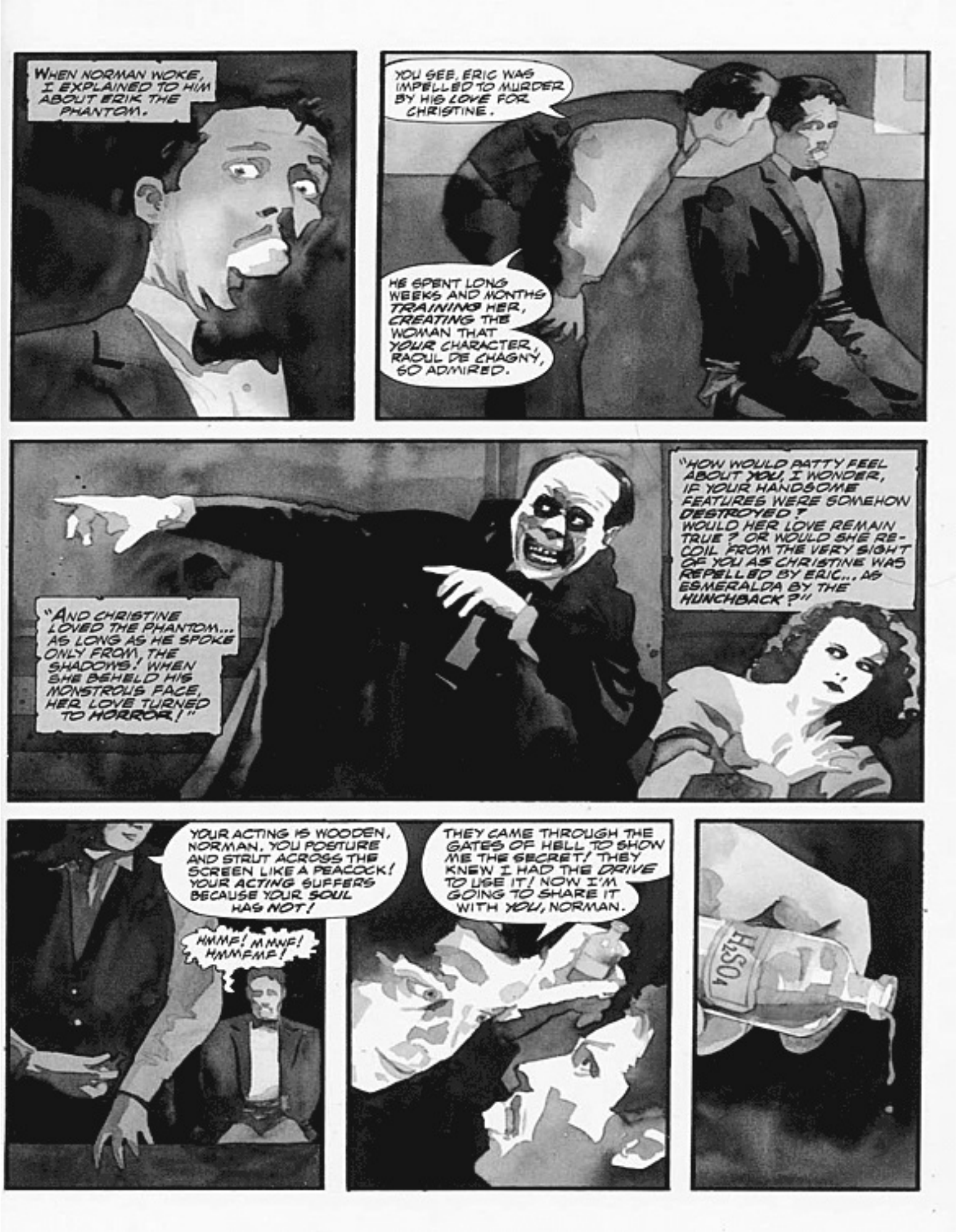
--THE UNFORGETTABLE HUNCHBACK OF NOTRE DAME!
ESMERALDA TOOK PITY ON THE BEAST, AND ONCE AGAIN THE WATER FLOWED OVER THAT DELIRIOUS AND SIMPLE FACE! THE PLEASURE I FELT AT THAT MOMENT WAS--INDESCRIBABLE!
AIEEEE! THAT MAN... THAT FACE! HE IS MY SON, MY HENRIK!
IT WAS NOT UNCOMMON FOR WOMEN TO SHRIEK ON FIRST SEEING THE HUNCHBACK'S FACE. SOME (I am told) ACTUALLY HAD TO BE LIGHERED FROM THE THEATER!
THIS HAS BEEN A GREAT BREAK FOR ME, PATTY. IMAGINE--ME, HEADLINING AFTER SO MANY YEARS AT THE BOTTOM OF THE BILL!
IT'S AS IF I'D BEEN STRUGGLING WITH SOME GIANT PUZZLE ALL THIS TIME, AND THE LAST PIECE HAS FINALLY DROPPED INTO PLACE!
I'M VERY HAPPY FOR YOU, HONESTLY.
TO-DAY
ADMISSION 10¢
I'VE WANTED TO MARRY YOU FOR SO LONG, BUT I NEVER DARED TO ASK! NOW I FEEL AS IF I COULD LICK THE WORLD, SO TELL ME--
WILL YOU MARRY ME, PATTY?
I...I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO SAY! I NEVER REALIZED...

IT'S NORMAN, YOU SEE. HE...WELL, HE PROPOSED, AND I SAID YES. I'M VERY FOND OF YOU, BUT...IT'S NORMAN THAT I LOVE.
NORMAN. I DIDN'T REALIZE...
I'M SO SORRY, YOU...YOU DO UNDERSTAND, DON'T YOU?
YES.
NORMAN PLAYED CAPTAIN PHOEBUS DE CHATEAUPERS IN THE FILM, THE MAN WHO COMMANDS ESMERALDA'S LOVE. YES, I WELL UNDERSTOOD THE WAYS OF A WOMAN'S HEART!
NEVER MIND MY SELFLESS DEVOTION! NEVER MIND THE WAY I SUFFERED FOR YOU, THAT I GAVE MY VERY LIFE TO SAVE YOURS!
LOOK ONLY AT THE FACE, ESMERALDA, AND NEVER MIND THE SOUL OF A MAN!
STOP
STOP
I UNDERSTAND, PATRICIA. OF COURSE I DO.

I OWED MUCH TO MY MIS-SHAPEN FRIEND. NOW IT WAS TIME TO STORE HIM AWAY AND CONSIDER THE DEMANDS OF MY NEXT ROLE.
FOR THIS ONE, EVEN HE WAS TOO HANDSOME! THIS TIME--
--I WOULD HAVE TO IMPROVISE.
THE FILM WAS PHANTOM OF THE OPERA. I WOULD STAR AS THE DEFORMED CREATURE, ERIK, AND NORMAN WOULD AGAIN PLAY THE DASHING HERO, THE VICOMTE RAOUL de CHAGNY.
OR...SO IT WAS WRITTEN.
I'VE BEEN THINKING, DARLING--
--WHAT IF WE POSTPONED ANNOUNCING OUR ENGAGEMENT UNTIL THE NEW FILM IS RELEASED? IT'D BE FABULOUS PUBLICITY!
PATTY! PEOPLE GET ENGAGED FOR LOVE, NOT TO SELL MOVIE TICKETS!
BUT YOU KNOW I LOVE YOU! WHAT'S WRONG WITH KILLING TWO BIRDS WITH ONE STONE?
MAYBE WE SHOULD TALK ABOUT IT LATER. IN PRIVATE.
NORMAN, I CAN'T TELL YOU HOW HAPPY I AM FOR YOU. SHE'S MUCH TOO GOOD FOR YOU, YOU KNOW!

DON'T I KNOW IT! I'M GLAD THERE'S NO HARD FEELINGS...
OF COURSE NOT! YOU MUST COME TO MY DRESSING ROOM FOR A CELEBRATORY DRINK!
BESIDES, THERE ARE A FEW THINGS I WANT TO DISCUSS-- CONCERNING THE FILM.
HAVE A SEAT. TELL ME-- WHAT DO YOU THINK OF THOSE DRAWINGS?
THEY'RE ONLY PRELIMINARY SKETCHES BUT I'M RATHER PLEASED SO FAR.
MY GOD--AND THE WOMEN SCREAMED WHEN THEY SAW QUASIMODO! THE USHERS WILL BE CARRYING THEM OUT ON STRETCHERS WHEN YOU'RE UNMASKED!
ARE YOU SURE YOU WANT TO BE SO... BOLD?
QUITE.

POLICE
THIS JUST CAME FOR YOU, MURRAY.
FROM ENGLAND. SCOTLAND YARD.
THIS'LL INTEREST YOU. YOU REMEMBER THAT INQUIRY WE RECEIVED FROM THE YARD ABOUT THE HUNCHBACK OF NOTRE DAME?
YOU MEAN THE LADY WHO SAW THE FLICK IN LONDON AND SWORE THE HUNCHBACK WAS HER DEAD SON?
RIGHT. THE CARNIVAL LADY. I WROTE BACK AND SUGGESTED THAT THEY EXHUME THE SON'S CORPSE.
WELL, THEY DUG HIM UP. IT SAYS HERE THE COFFIN HAD BEEN BROKEN INTO. THE WOMAN SAW THE BODY AND WENT INTO HYSTERICS--
JESUS!
SOMEBODY... CUT OFF HIS FACE--!
WON'T YOU HAVE ANOTHER DRINK?
NO...NO THANKS. THAT FIRST ONE WENT STRAIGHT TO MY HEAD. EMPTY STOMACH, I GUESS.
I...I FEEL--
NOW WE BEGIN.

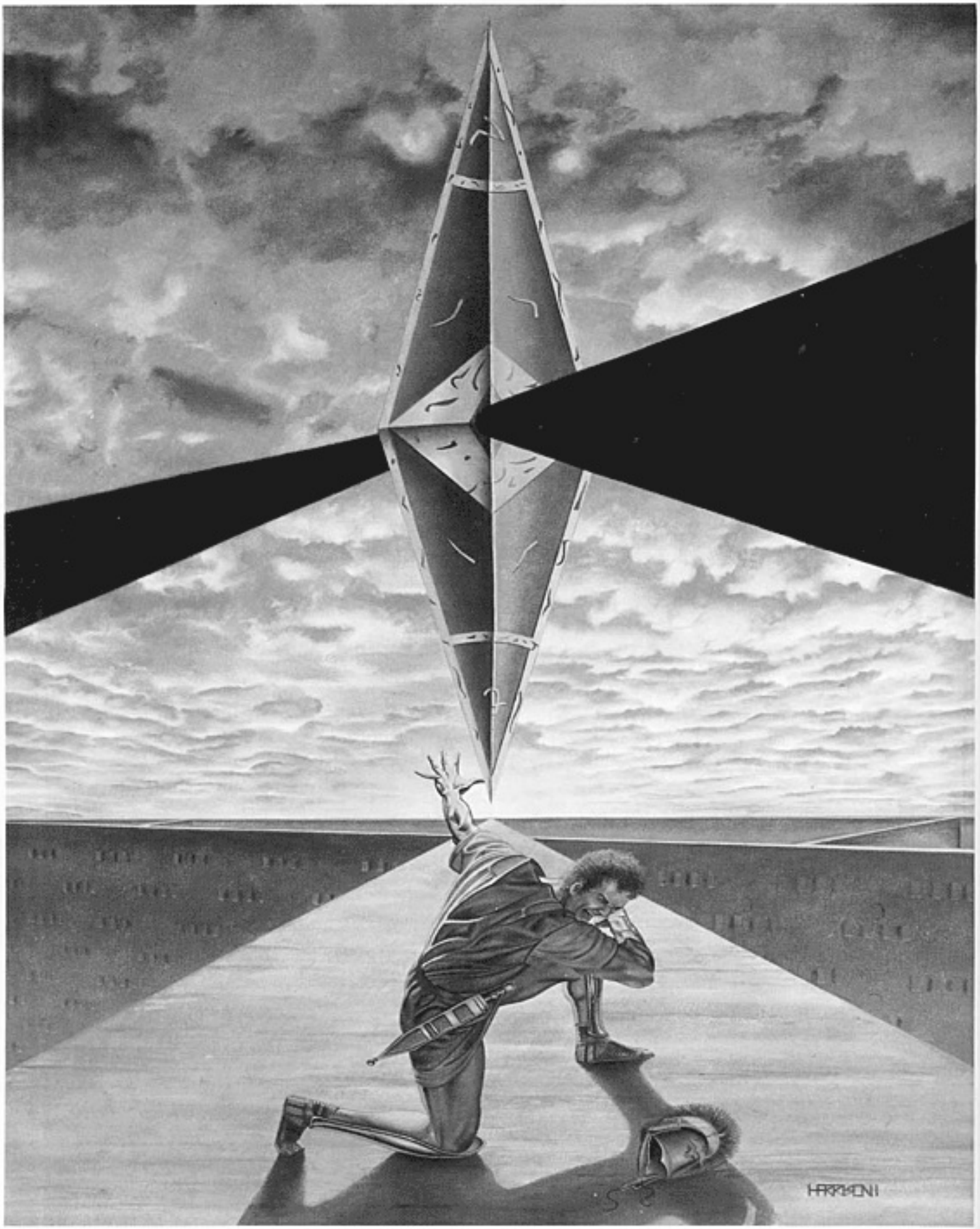

WHEN NORMAN WOKE, I EXPLAINED TO HIM ABOUT ERIK THE PHANTOM.
YOU SEE, ERIC WAS IMPELLED TO MURDER BY HIS LOVE FOR CHRISTINE.
HE SPENT LONG WEEKS AND MONTHS TRAINING HER, CREATING THE WOMAN THAT YOUR CHARACTER, RAOUL DE CHAGNY, SO ADMIRED.
"AND CHRISTINE LOVED THE PHANTOM... AS LONG AS HE SPOKE ONLY FROM THE SHADOWS! WHEN SHE BEHELD HIS MONSTROUS FACE, HER LOVE TURNED TO HORROR!"
"HOW WOULD PATTY FEEL ABOUT YOU, I WONDER, IF YOUR HANDSOME FEATURES WERE SOMEHOW DESTROYED? WOULD HER LOVE REMAIN TRUE? OR WOULD SHE RECOIL FROM THE VERY SIGHT OF YOU AS CHRISTINE WAS REPELLED BY ERIC.., AS ESMERALDA BY THE HUNCHBACK?"
YOUR ACTING IS WOODEN, NORMAN. YOU POSTURE AND STRUT ACROSS THE SCREEN LIKE A PEACOCK! YOUR ACTING SUFFERS BECAUSE YOUR SOUL HAS NOT!
HMMF! MMNF! HMMFMF!
THEY CAME THROUGH THE GATES OF HELL TO SHOW ME THE SECRET! THEY KNEW I HAD THE DRIVE TO USE IT! NOW I'M GOING TO SHARE IT WITH YOU, NORMAN.
H_2SO_4

YOU WILL APPEAR ON SCREEN, MY FRIEND, AND YOU WILL DELIVER THE PERFORMANCE OF A LIFETIME! BUT YOU'LL NOT DO IT AS THE HANDSOME RAOUL--
--BUT AS THE TORTURED ERIK, THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA!
GO AHEAD AND SCREAM--
"NO ONE WILL HEAR."
BAM BAM BAM
"I WILL ANIMATE YOUR FLESH! MY SWEAT WILL ISSUE THROUGH YOUR PORES! MY MUSCLES WILL GIVE EXPRESSION TO YOUR HIDEOUS FEATURES!"
BAM BAM BAM
"I KNEW I COULD NEVER FIND A FACE AS TERRIBLE AS ERIK'S... THAT I WOULD HAVE TO MANUFACTURE ONE! THIS IS A GREAT HONOR I BESTOW UPON YOU!"
MMNF HMMFMF! HMMF!
BAM BAM BAM

HOLD IT, YOU! POLICE!
CHRIST! WHAT ARE YOU DOING? WHAT'S IN THAT BOTTLE?
KRAASH!
H_2SO_4
NO! LEAVE ME ALONE!
THIS COULDN'T BE HAPPENING! HOW HAD THEY FOUND OUT? DIDN'T THEY KNOW WHAT THEY WERE DOING?
EASY DOES IT, BUSTER. BACK AWAY SLOWLY.
EASY DOES IT NOW.
YOU IDIOTS! YOU'RE DESTROYING THE PERFORMANCE OF THE AGES! THERE WOULD NEVER BE A PHANTOM TO EQUAL MINE!

I'LL KILL YOU BEFORE I LET YOU RUIN THAT!
THAT WAS WHEN YOU CAME FOR ME.
WHAT IN THE HELL--?
YOU! YOU'RE THE ONE!
"MY TEACHER."
COME.
I WISH I COULD HAVE SEEN THEIR FACES--
--WHEN YOU TOOK US AWAY.

I HAD TO LEAVE FAGIN AND QUASIMODO BEHIND, UNFORTUNATELY. SINCE THEN, I'VE ADDED CONSIDERABLY TO MY COLLECTION. LUCKILY, THEY DON'T SEEM TO PUTREFY HERE.
I HAVE A FACE FOR EVERY OCCASION, ONE FOR EVERY MOOD.
VERY NICE. YOU'VE ADAPTED WELL. LEVIATHAN IS PLEASED.
I'VE BEEN USING STAPLES TO FASTEN THEM ON, BUT I'VE GROWN RATHER INURED TO THE PAIN. I'VE STARTED THINKING ABOUT SCREWS--
The End


HARMONI

AFTERWORD

There is no such thing as an essence of horror. Horror is a chameleon, changing with its environs, from place to place, person to person, age to age. But there is an essence in man that seeks horror, that is universal from place to place, person to person, and ageless.

The attic of my parents' home was a dark place that bred that essense. A railroad system of rooms piled high with boxes of outgrown clothes and forgotten furniture, it was a child's wonderland. Through my pre-teen years I had, with the help of friends, slowly transformed the rooms from a neatly organized warehouse into a soft, mountainous landscape that probably had a floor under it, somewhere. Two of the rooms had a connecting door which, knob removed, had been locked for as long as I could remember. But, because of their strange victorian arrangements and interior shapes, the long corridor outside the first room lent no indication that it could be connected to the second in any way. Keen detective work—or what could pass for it at my age—connected the two sides of the door in my mind, but it took a while. It would take a stranger, I reasoned, even longer. The stage was set.

A long and fairly complicated story of gremlins (years before the movie) was the overture, my attic the stage, and my friend, Benson, the anxious victim—make that audience—to my work of horror fiction. Standing him to one side, I set the mood and braced myself against the locked door, sliding a broken knob into place. The door rattled. Benson stepped back.

Announcing my mistake, with an edge of oh-god-please-don't-tell-my-dad panic in my voice, I ordered him to brace the door while I went to help. He obeyed, looking to me for some answer, some control of the situation he'd fallen into. I ran out.

Outside the room, I headed for the connected room—for the shared door. There, I began to hit the door, slowly at first, then with increasing vigor. In tandem came the sound effects, the natural accompaniment of any attack from the unknown. Rhythmic. Furious.

Five. That was how many times I had to hit the door before Benson took off for the stairs, heroism forsaken for the instinct of self-preservation. I raced after him through three floors, finally catching up with him outside the house with lungs empty from racing and laughing at once. He laughed too—after he hit me.

There is no essence of horror. But if one were to classify that drive; that desire in man to be afraid and to live with fear, breathlessly; to be alive by experiencing the ultimate fear of that moment when we anticipate death, it might boil down to one thing.

We seek the door, but we don't want it to open.

In Clive Barker's Hellraiser, we'll certainly be opening a great many doors, and there's no telling what we may let out. We'll be back in just three months, with a whole new labyrinth, so stick around. I still have that broken door knob.

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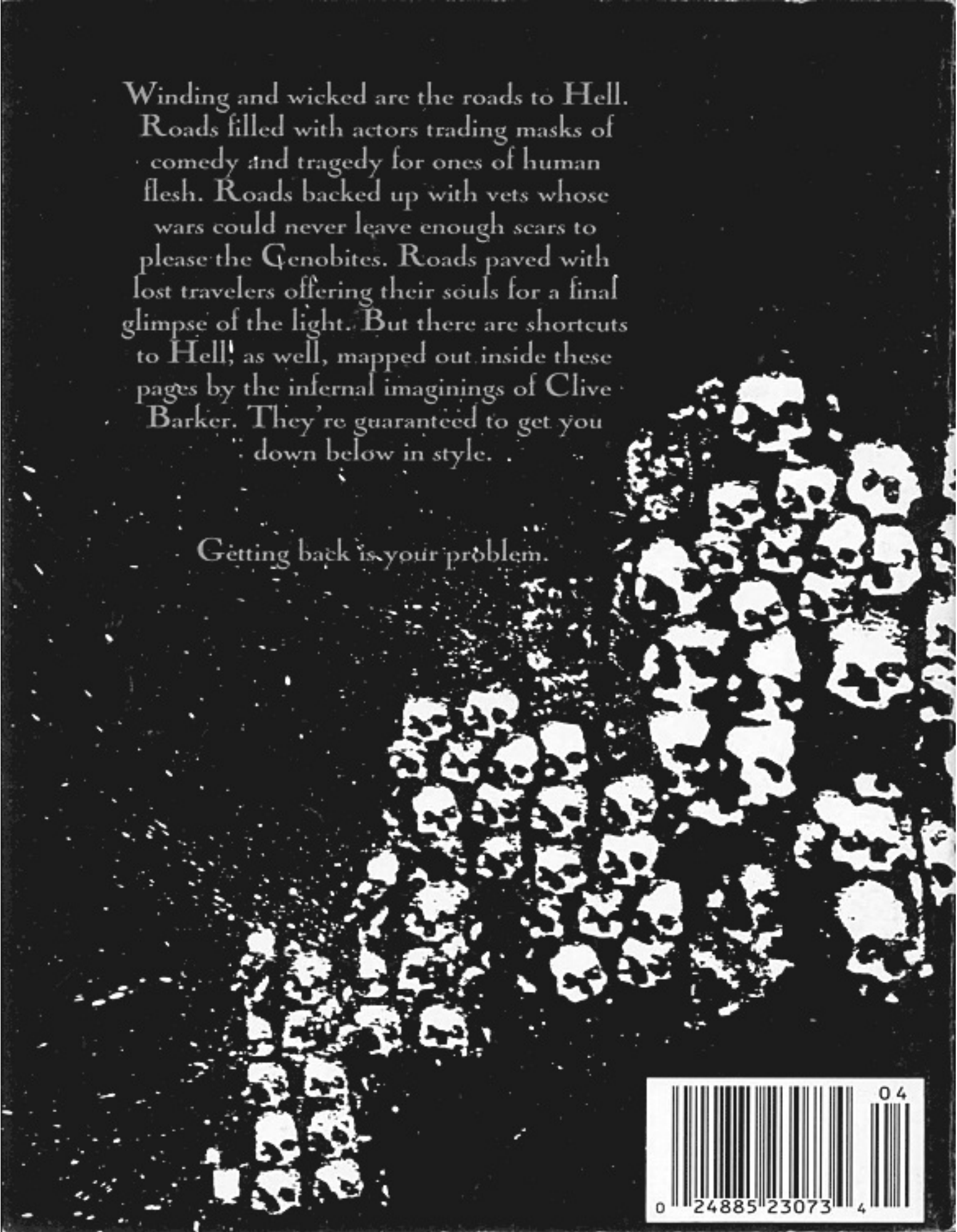
Winding and wicked are the roads to Hell. Roads filled with actors trading masks of comedy and tragedy for ones of human flesh. Roads backed up with vets whose wars could never leave enough scars to please the Cenobites. Roads paved with lost travelers offering their souls for a final glimpse of the light. But there are shortcuts to Hell, as well, mapped out inside these pages by the infernal imaginings of Clive Barker. They're guaranteed to get you down below in style.

Getting back is your problem.



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